須弥
伊藤悠
シュトヘル
6
BIG SPIRITS COMICS SPECIAL
伊藤悠
小学館
BIG SPIRITS COMICS SPECIAL
ISBN978-4-09-184550-4
C9979 ¥590E
定価：本体590円＋税
雑誌 45795-50 小学館

BIG
SPIRITS
COMICS
SPECIAL

疑惑

6

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潜航

6

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BIG SPIRITS COMICS SPECIAL

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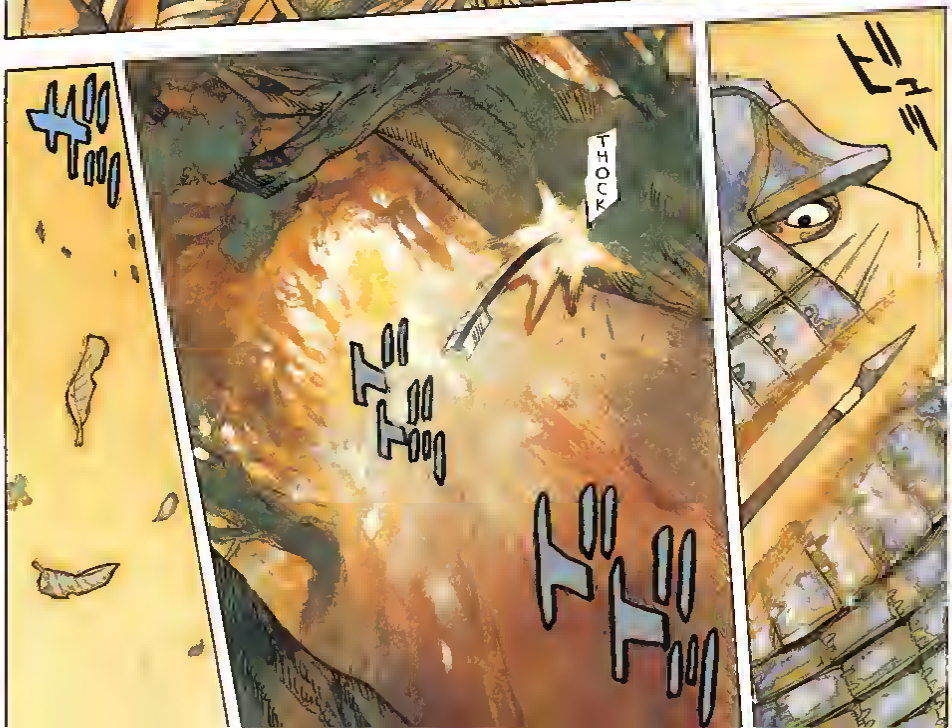
*The characters on the cover flap read “old general” in Tangut script.

We're going to shake them off.
Make for the gap in the trees!

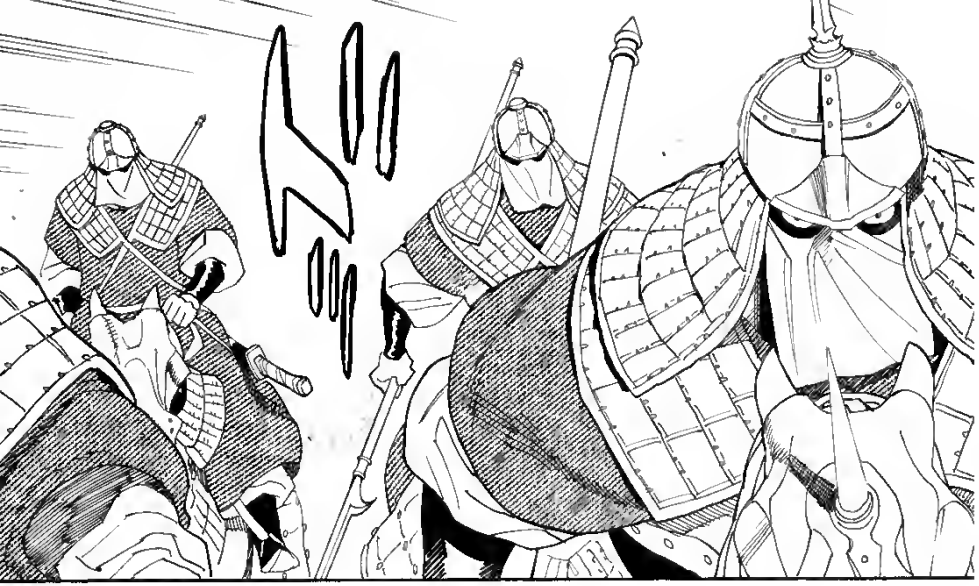
Chapter XXXVIII The Bloody Tiger
Do you think you can escape!?
Wild mongol rats!

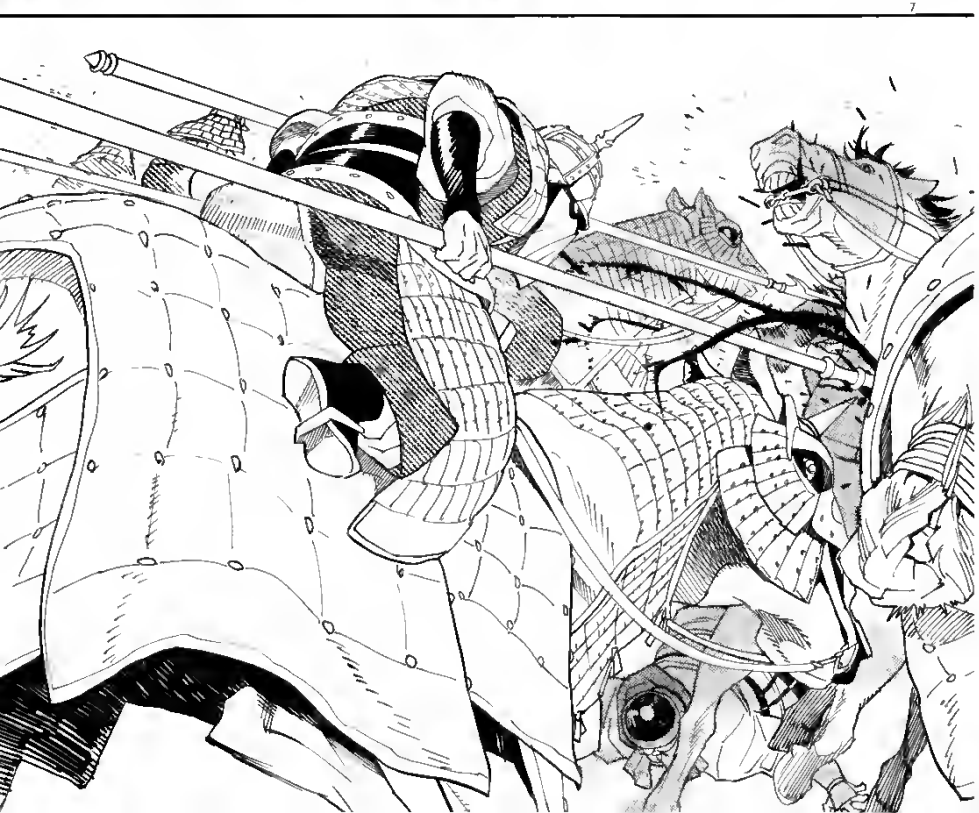

THOCK

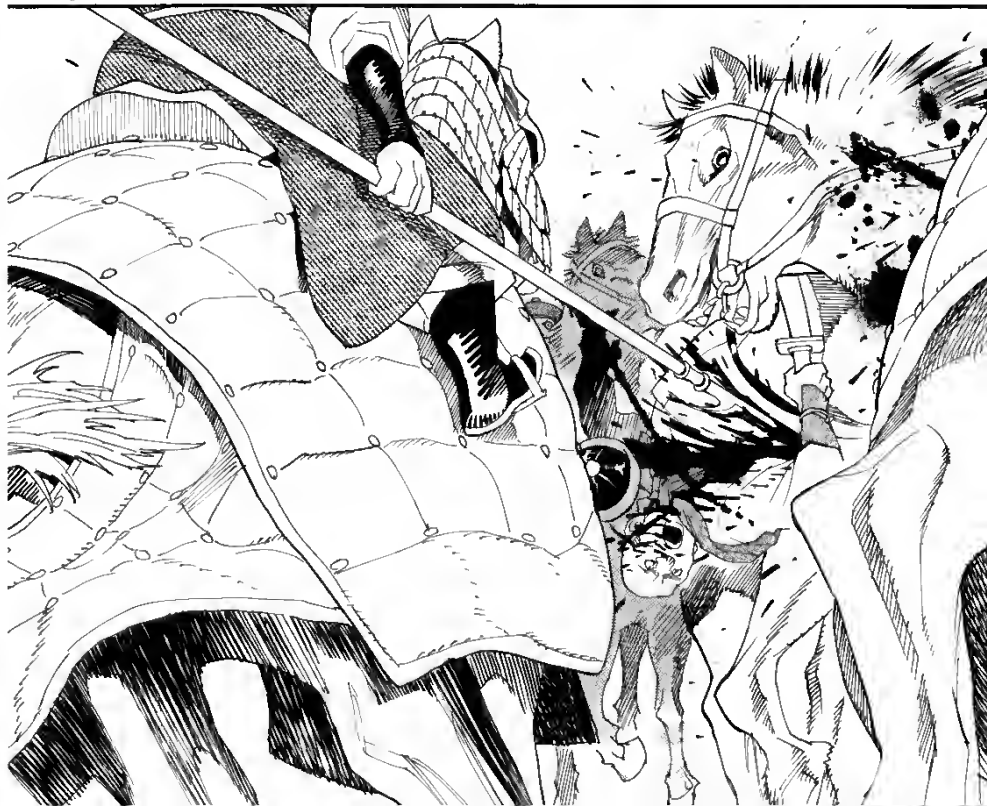
[Chapter XXXVIII The Bloody Tiger

Scatter!
What!?

Go.







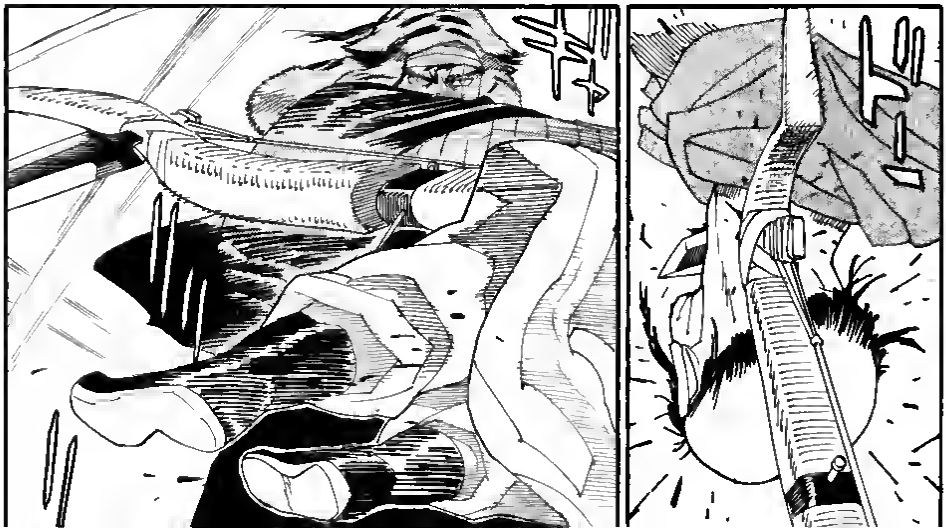
Fall back!
Fall back!
From our flank!?
Are bearing down on us from our flanks!
The enemies we thought scattered moments ago

Aie-ee!
Uhe-ee!
Please wait, Mongols!
I'm the commander.
Please spare my men!
We surrender!
You have your victory! Wait!

ドゥ
……

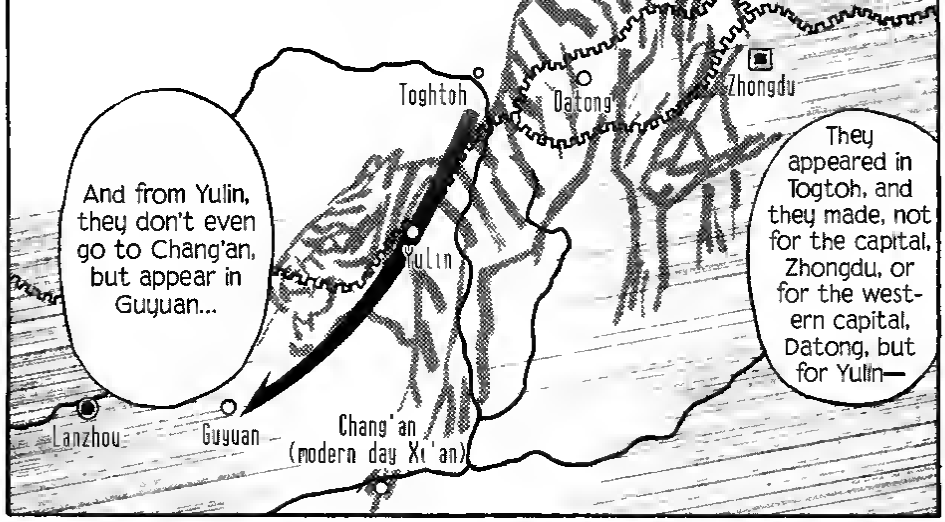
ズル

ズル
ズル


ドゴ
ドゴ

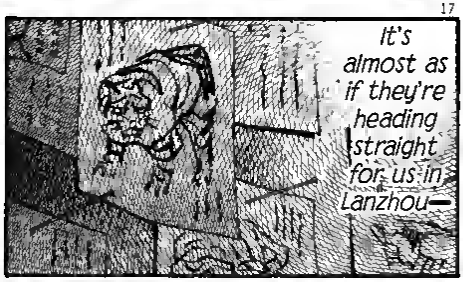
THUD

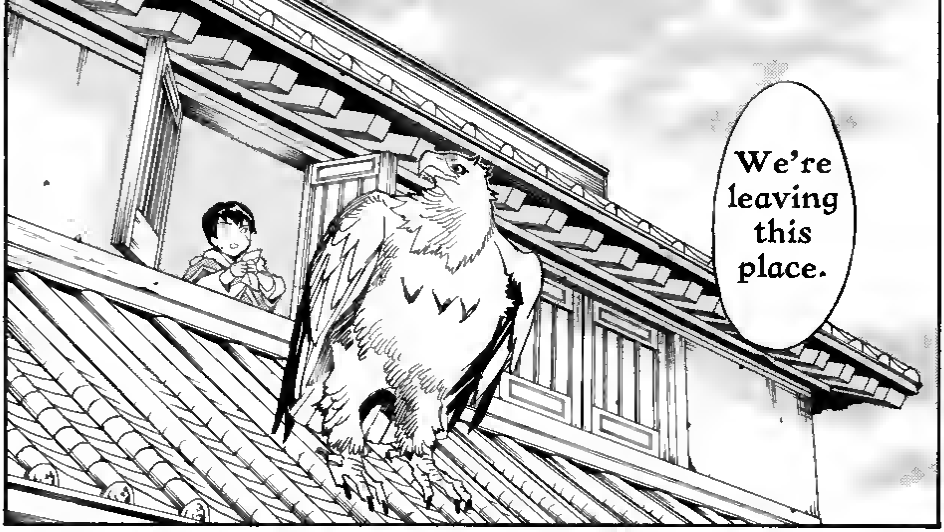
That's close. The same division?
West, towards Guyuan. Another bloody Mongol tiger has appeared.
There's no question. Their behavior is consistent.
Good work. Go.
16
Togtoh... Yulin... and now Guyuan...
Their progress is strange.
PLOP
PLOP
So, they appear in small numbers and destroy our fortresses,
or else kill so many of our soldiers that we're forced to fall back.


Toghtoh
Datong
Zhongdu
Yulin
Lanzhou
Guyuan
Chang'an
(modern day Xi'an)
They appeared in Togtoh, and they made, not for the capital, Zhongdu, or for the western capital, Datong, but for Yulin—
And from Yulin, they don't even go to Chang'an, but appear in Guyuan...

カハ

Why is an isolated enemy force penetrating so deep into our territory...?
And what is the reason for their incomprehensible westward advance?


It's almost as if they're heading straight for us in Lanzhou—

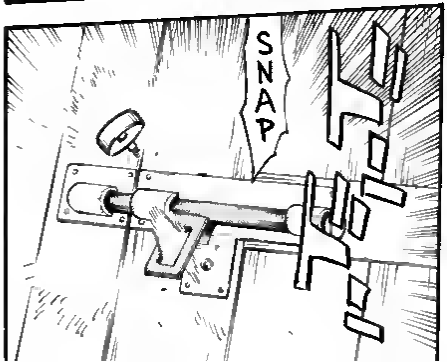

We're leaving this place.

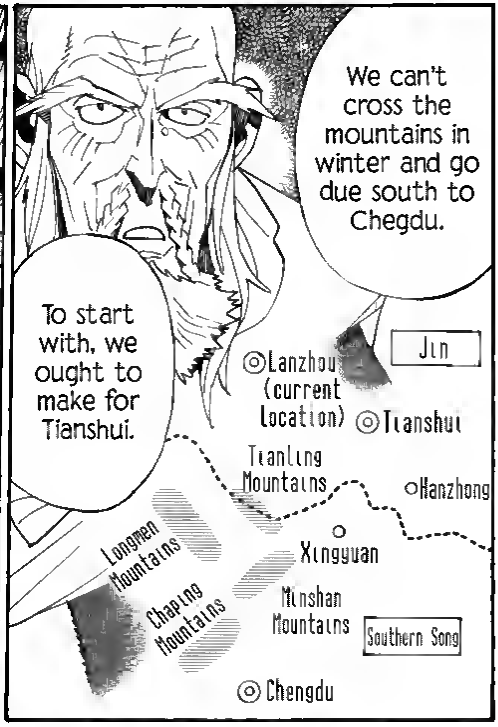
The Mongols must be getting closer.
Boldu says he saw the Jin soldiers in Lanzhou moving hurriedly early this morning.

...It's too bad about Ibaha, but—
You mean we should make our move while they draw Jin's attention?

Jilgus, the Jin general who knows about the existence of the Voice of Jade—
We can't risk coming into direct contact with him.

—Yurul, get away from the door.


SNAP


We can't cross the mountains in winter and go due south to Chegdu.
To start with, we ought to make for Tianshui.
Jin
Lanzhou (current location)
Tianshui
Tianling Mountains
Hanzhong
Longmen Mountains
Xingyuan
Chaping Mountains
Minshan Mountains
Southern Song
Chengdu

...The brat and the geezer ...!
I knew it was you!

They're here! Come on, we'll—
Beh ...!
ガ

Ugeh!
OOPH!
Sudoh!

Urk!
Yurul! Gramps! Out the window!

I'll knock these guys down and block the door.
After that I'll be right behind you!
—We'll get horses.

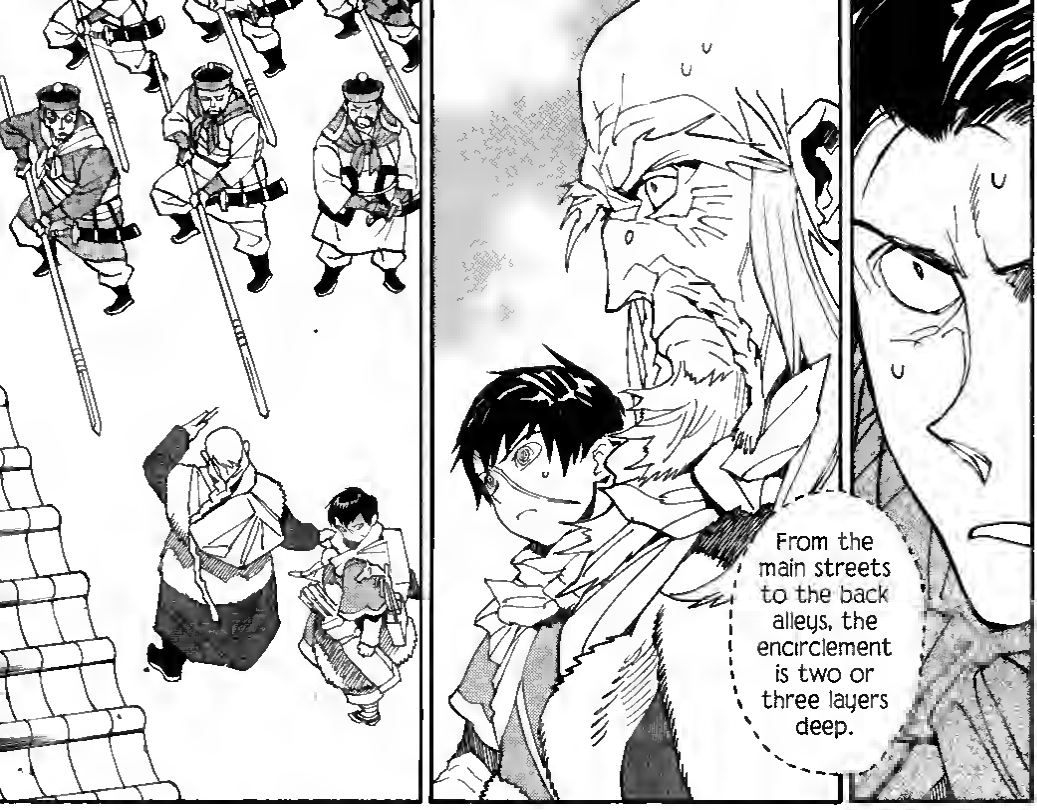
Until later, Sudoh.

Hey!
Alright, I've got to hurry too, or—
どが
I wonder if he understood this pose
Ah.

Hey, don't go, Sudoh!

!

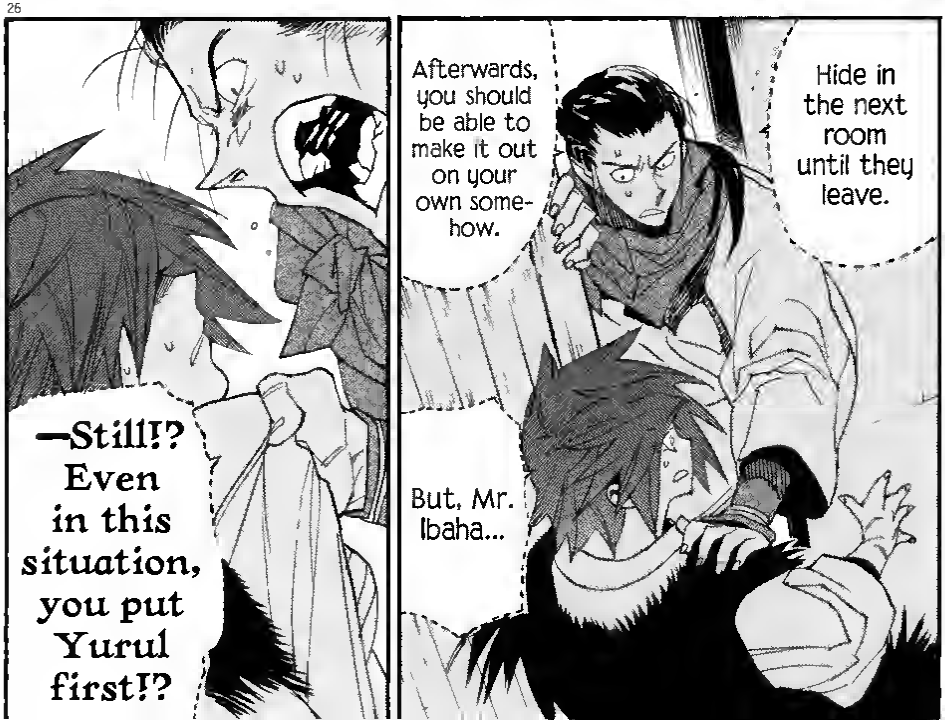
There was some unexpected delay on the second floor.
Just shut up and listen, okay?
This inn is already surrounded.


From the main streets to the back alleys, the encirclement is two or three layers deep.

—There's no escape.

"Hurry. Rather than let them escape—"
I don't know why, but they suddenly sent out troops to catch the old man and the brat.

You'll be safe.
—Luckily, Sudoh, you weren't included.
"you have my permission to kill them."


—Still!? Even in this situation, you put Yurul first!?
But, Mr. Ibaha...
Afterwards, you should be able to make it out on your own somehow.
Hide in the next room until they leave.

I can't live without Yurul.
That's right.
The guys below probably have them by now.
The old man and the kid!?
They fled through the window of that room.
They'll just capture you too.
Are you okay with it ending like that?

I only just managed to meet you again...
...Yurul.

—Right away!
I'm coming to get you.

I apologize for startling you.

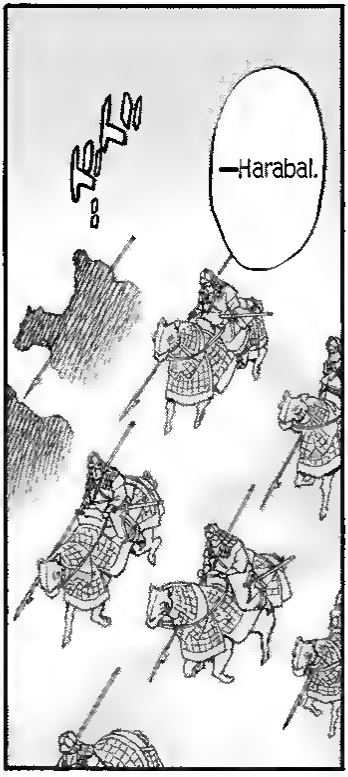
SCRAMBLE

Although I originally wanted to invite you a bit more peaceably.
I'd like you to accompany me as a guest.

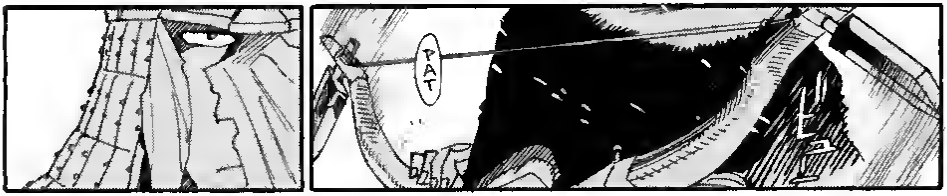
Is that what the bloody tiger is racing here to get?
Is that package what he's after—?

—Ti~
ger...?

Is the red tiger... some sort of offer- ing?


—Harabal.

CRUNCH
To the Tsog, now that they've been de—


PAT

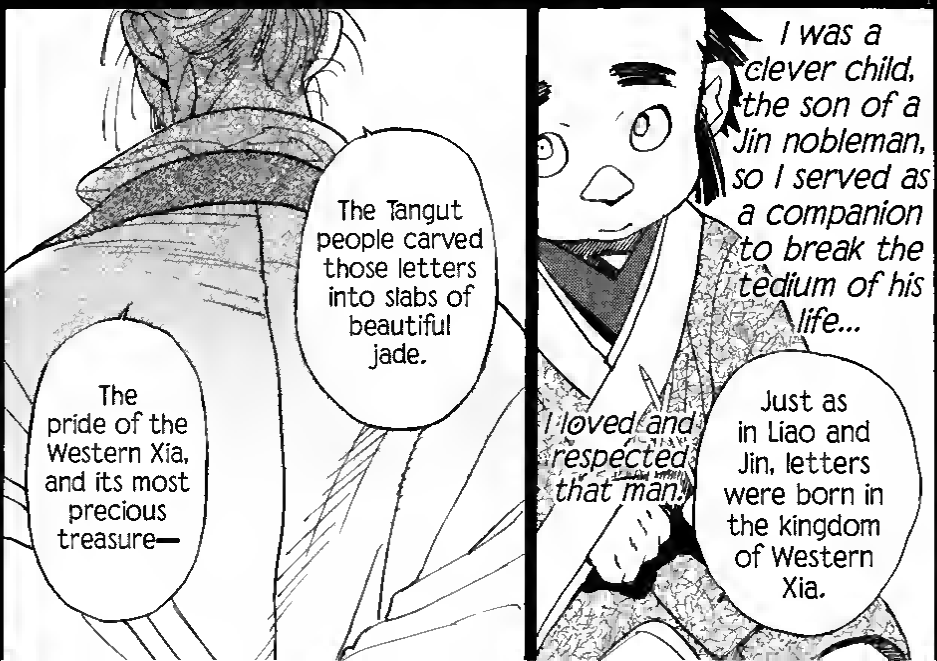
It's proof

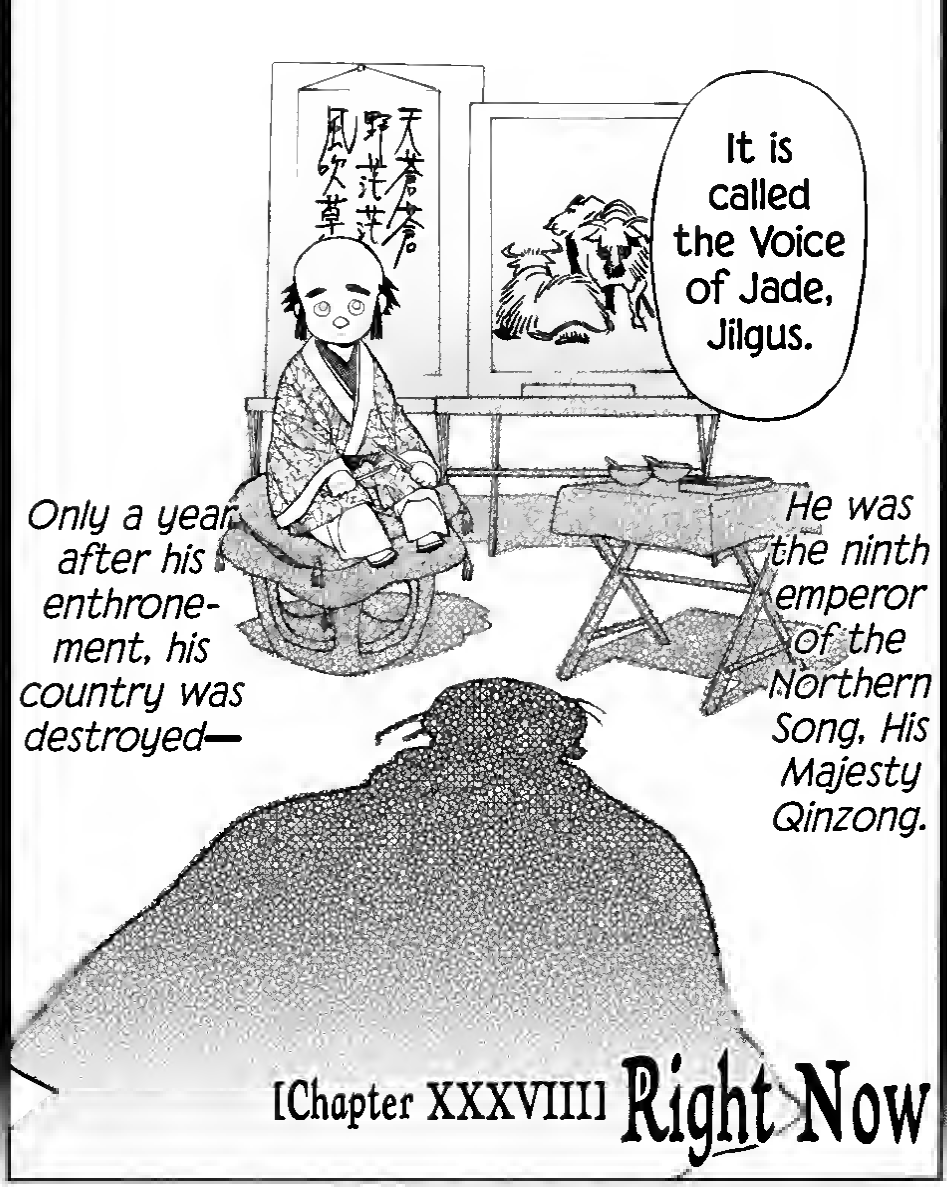
that the Tsog tribe is not destroy-ed.

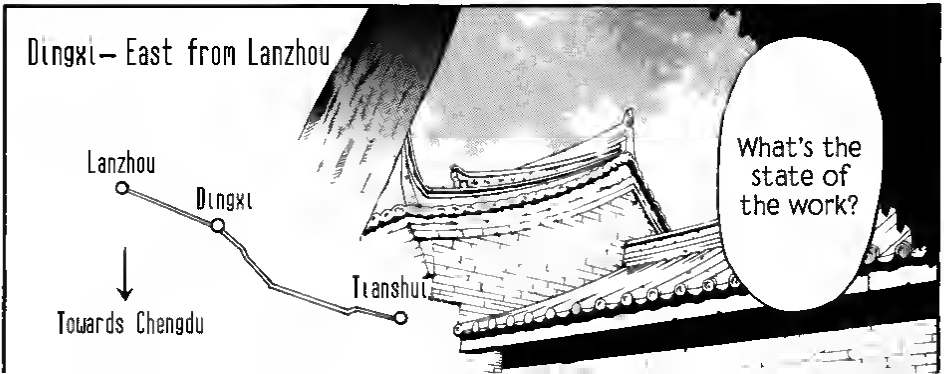
SHUT HELL
By Itoh Yu
Translation: OtherSideofSky
Cleaning: Riron Wakabayashy
Lettering & Redraws: Nethandle
happyscans.blogspot.com

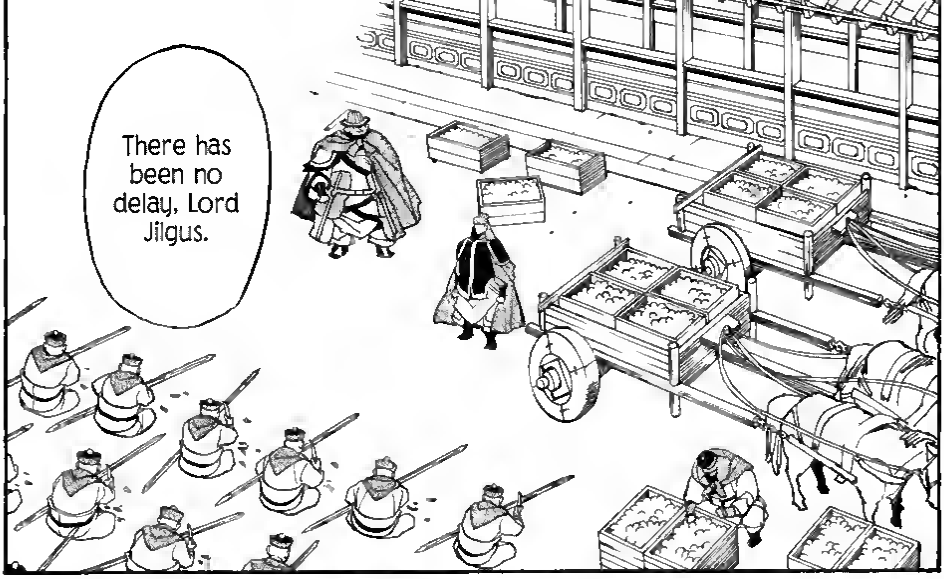
—Twelve years before I was born, that man
was confined in Wuguo Castle, in the kingdom of Jin, and he lived there for a long time.
—Letters carved in jade...?
[Chapter XXXVIII] Right Now

and I never tired of that man's talk.
It is said that my grandfather's grandfather beheld it just once.
The items from the capital of the Northern Song, which we Jin had destroyed, were exquisite,

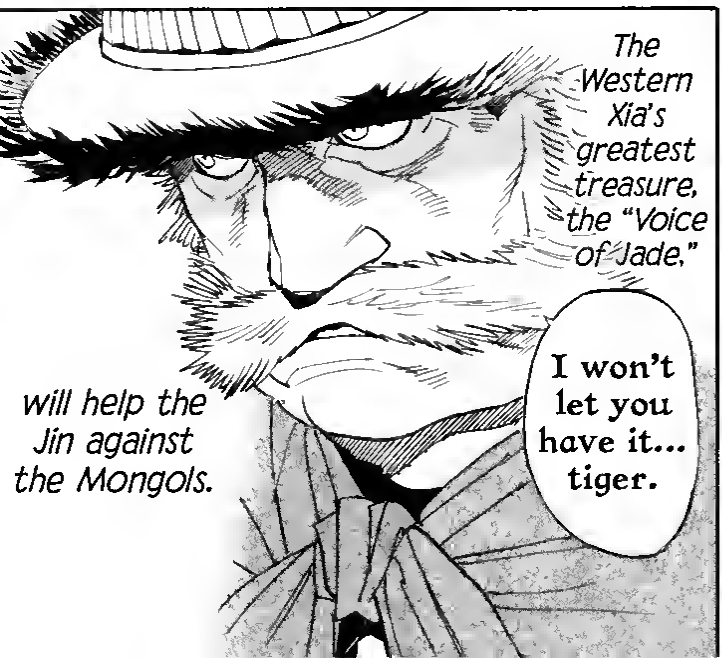

The pride of the Western Xia, and its most precious treasure—
The Tangut people carved those letters into slabs of beautiful jade.
I was a clever child, the son of a Jin nobleman, so I served as a companion to break the tedium of his life...
I loved and respected that man.
Just as in Liao and Jin, letters were born in the kingdom of Western Xia.

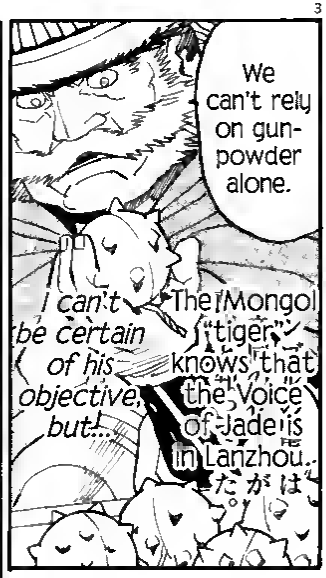

天蒼蒼
野茫茫
風吹草
It is called the Voice of Jade, Jilgus.
Only a year after his enthrone-ment, his country was destroyed—
He was the ninth emperor of the Northern Song, His Majesty Qinzong.
[Chapter XXXVIII] Right Now

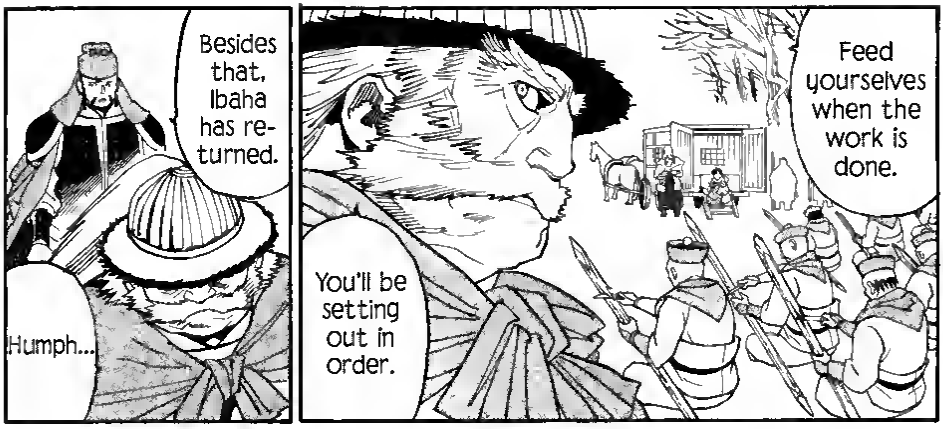

2
Dingxi— East from Lanzhou
Lanzhou
Dingxi
Towards Chengdu
Tianshui
What's the state of the work?


There has been no delay, Lord Jilgus.

They can be more misshapen than ordinary spears, but they need to be plenty thick.
Sharpen both ends.


The Western Xia's greatest treasure, the "Voice of Jade."
will help the Jin against the Mongols.
I won't let you have it... tiger.

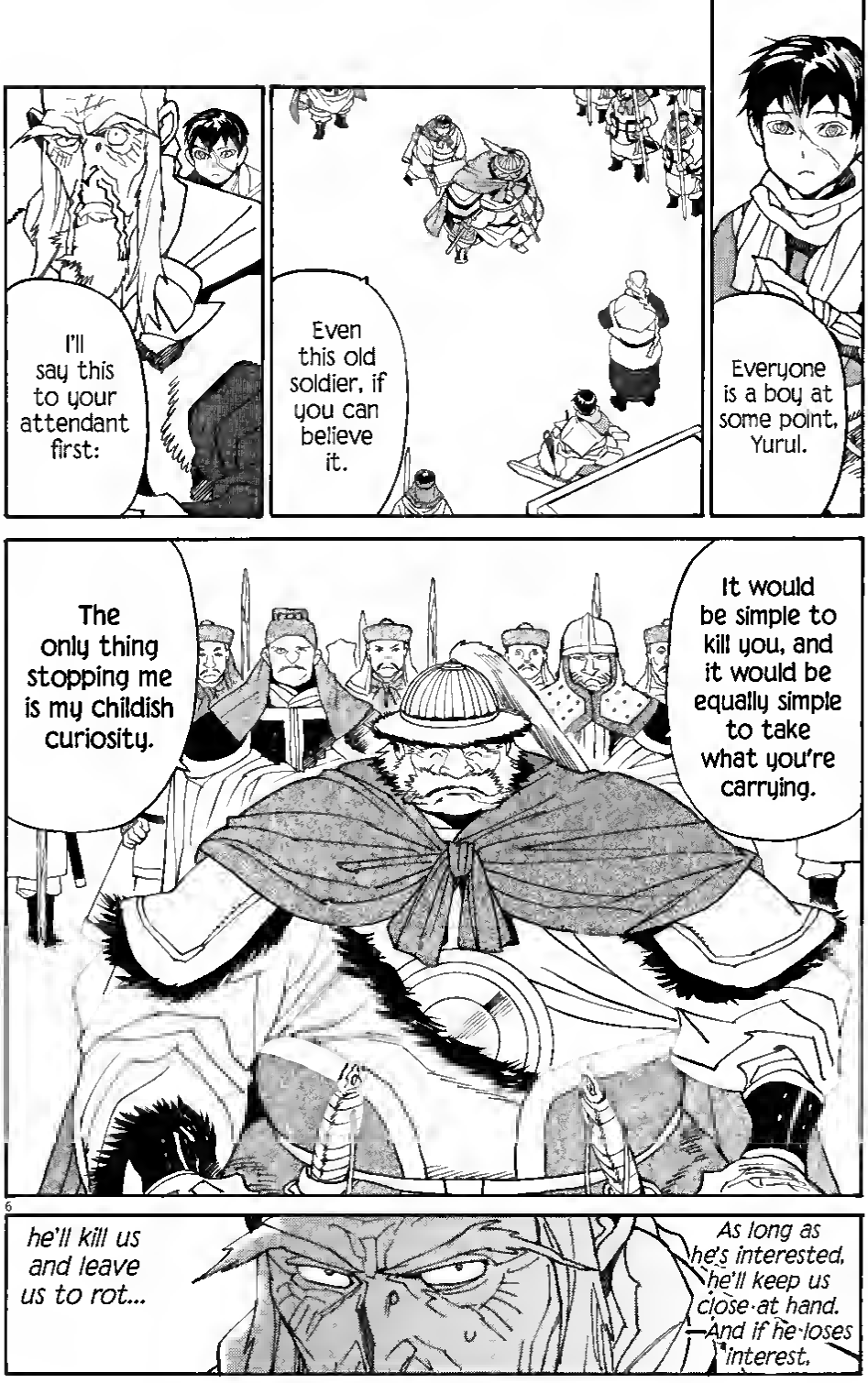

We can't rely on gunpowder alone.
I can't be certain of his objective, but...
The Mongol "tiger" knows that the Voice of Jade is in Lanzhou.
たがは。


Besides that, Ibaha has returned.
Humph...
You'll be setting out in order.
Feed yourselves when the work is done.

We're being treated as guests in name only.
They haven't taken our baggage or bows, but...
That's all we can hope for now.
...I wonder if Sudoh is alright.

With this many soldiers surrounding us, they don't need to.

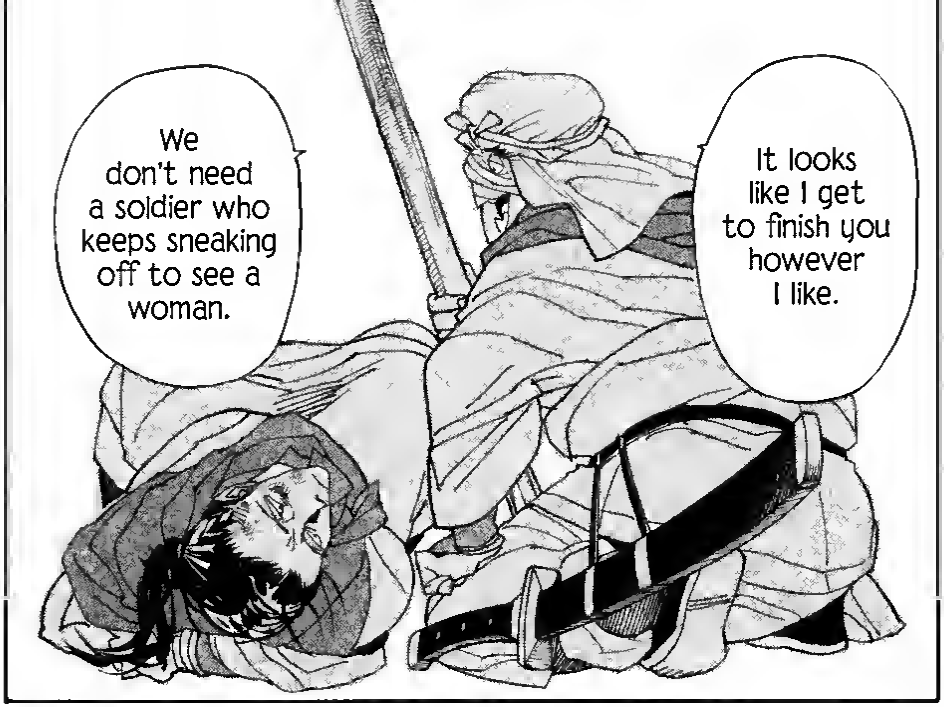
It's a long journey to Chengdu, the capital of our kingdom of Jin.
Don't be so stiff; you won't last like that.
SQAWK
...Lord Yurul!
Straight to the point. You're younger than I imagined.
We cannot accompany you.
Our destination is Song—the Southern Song.
...Chengdu—!?
General.


Everyone is a boy at some point, Yurul.
Even this old soldier, if you can believe it.
I'll say this to your attendant first:
It would be simple to kill you, and it would be equally simple to take what you're carrying.
The only thing stopping me is my childish curiosity.
As long as he's interested, he'll keep us close at hand. And if he loses interest, he'll kill us and leave us to rot...

I'm telling you it's no use boring me with trivialities,
...He's not looking away; looks like the kid's got guts.
bearer of the "Voice of Jade."
Uguh!

You came traipsing back here without even noticing
You're as dumb as I thought, Ibaha.

What a moron.
COUGH
HACK
that you'd been found out!
GUH


We don't need a soldier who keeps sneaking off to see a woman.
It looks like I get to finish you however I like.

Just a minute.
Hurry up and finish it, Alunge. We wanna go eat.

"Mr Ibaha."
So, I guess that means that wolf-woman got away in spite of everything.

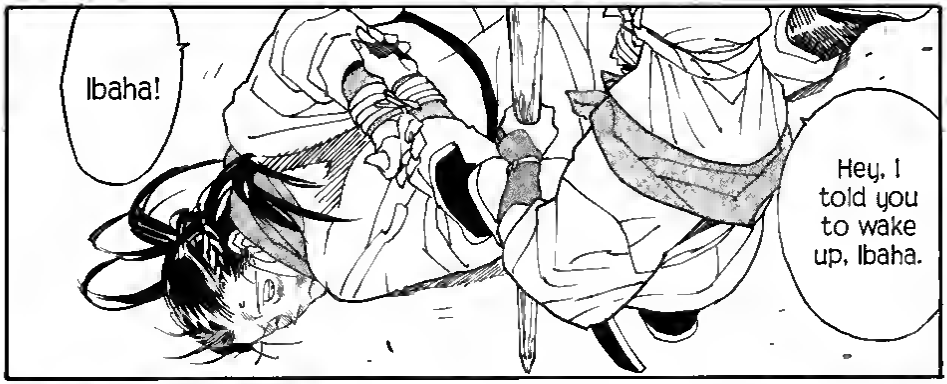
The only place I'm going is where Yurul is.
Mr. Ibaha...
If we make it out of Lanzhou, maybe I should go to Song too.
Mr. Ibaha.
—Run away with me.
...I can't take any-more.
That's why—
I'm betraying the place I settled down in.
It wasn't just crossing a dangerous bridge.
I saved you; that should be enough.

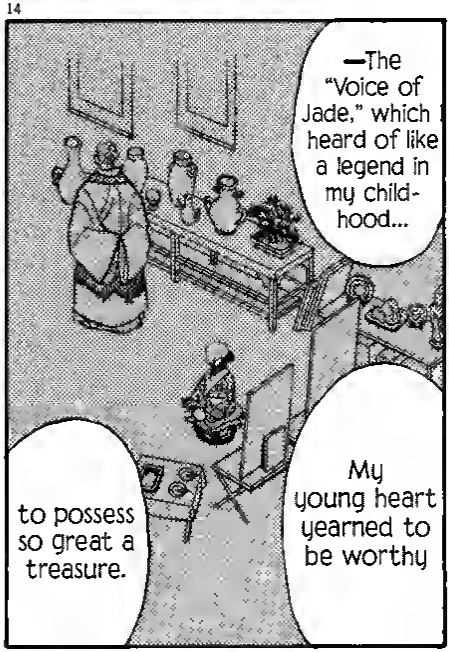
Sudoh. Every time I save you and your friends.
I feel like less of a man.
I'm a real re-spectable soldier now.
If I hurry, I can go back. I'll forget about you, and—
.....
...I'm sorry.
I get it.
ばん

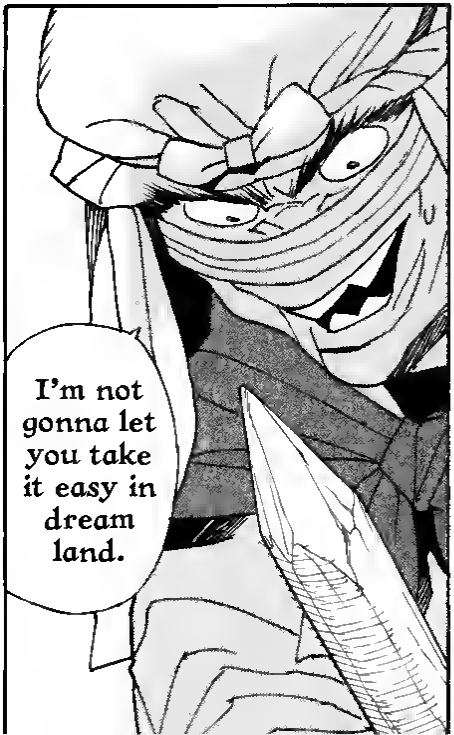
...I'll forget about you, and live an honest life.
My way back is that way.
Get going.
It's a bit too much for coincidence!
You sure you're not doing this on purpose?
Don't you EVER do what people tell you? Not even a little thing like this...?
Huh? Sorry.
Oh, sorry. I'll get out of your way.
Shut up.
Ah
You're so funny, Mr. Ibaha.

—I won't forget all you've done for us.
And you've always been the one saving me, so this might come off as a self-serving thing to say, but somehow,
who ever had any proper friends or anything like that, but...
I'm not the type
somehow, Mr. Ibaha, you—
...Shut up, idiot!

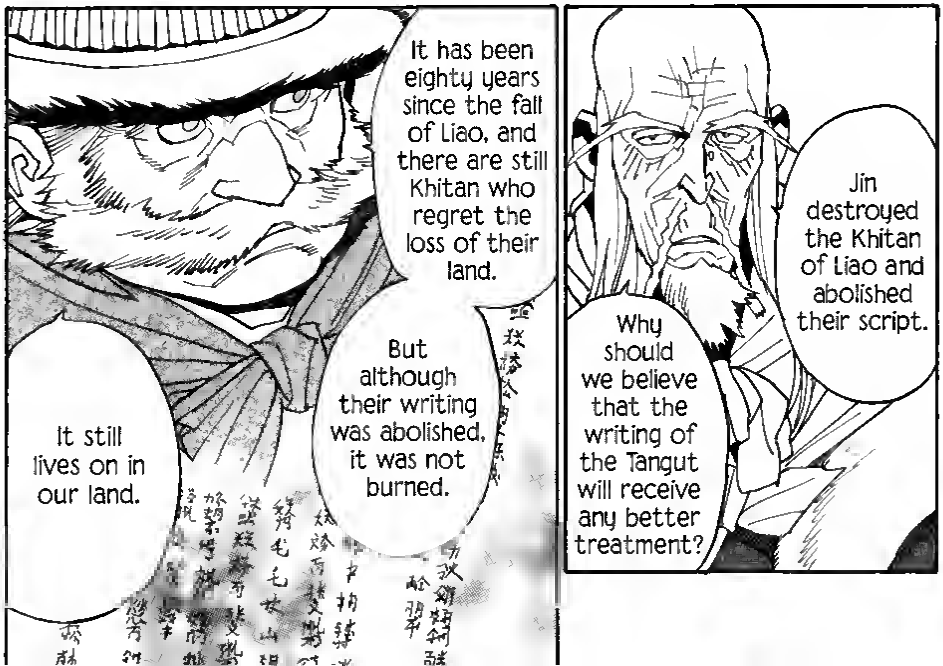
...Shut up, idiot...


Ibaha!
Hey, I told you to wake up, Ibaha.

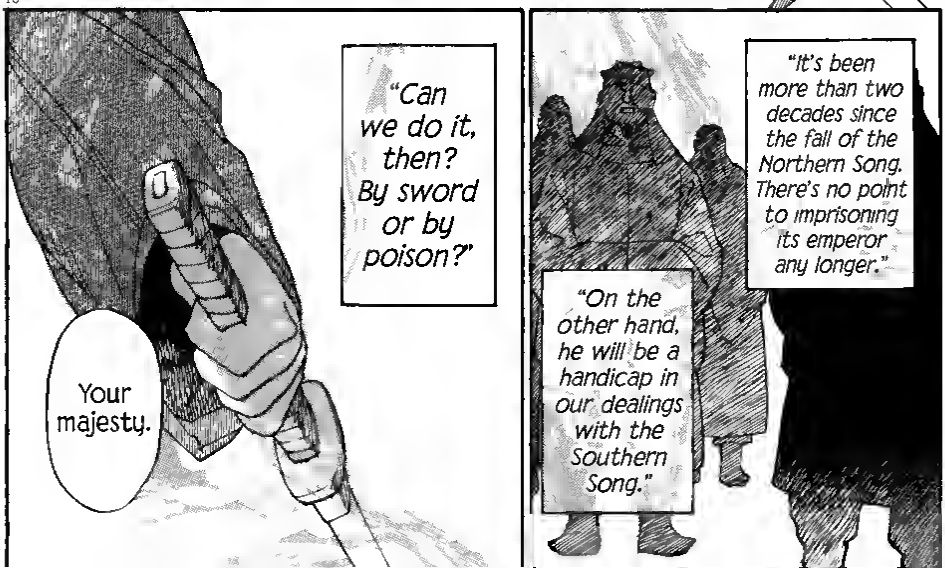

—The "Voice of Jade," which heard of like a legend in my child-hood...
My young heart yearned to be worthy
to possess so great a treasure.


I'm not gonna let you take it easy in dream land.

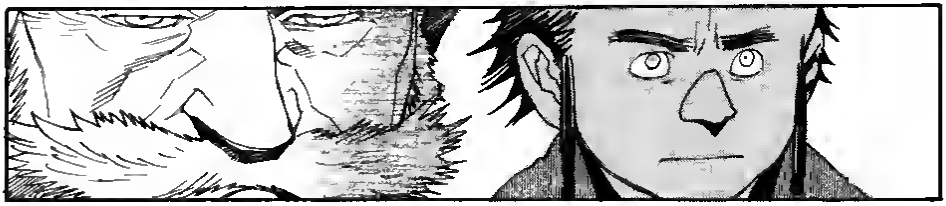
Now, bearers.
The Mongols are burning up the writing of Western Xia like men possessed.
If you want to protect their writing—protect the Voice of Jade, then seek the protection of our land of Jin.
The Southern Song is a nation of fugitives from the Northern Song, which we destroyed.
There's no reason for you to make for such a land.


Jin destroyed the Khitan of Liao and abolished their script.
Why should we believe that the writing of the Tangut will receive any better treatment?
It has been eighty years since the fall of Liao, and there are still Khitan who regret the loss of their land.
But although their writing was abolished, it was not burned.
It still lives on in our land.

General, are you thinking of using the Voice of Jade... the continued existence of the Tangut script
as a bargaining chip in international negotiations?
And like that it will slowly die, isn't that right?


Your majesty.
"Can we do it, then? By sword or by poison?"
"On the other hand, he will be a handicap in our dealings with the Southern Song."
"It's been more than two decades since the fall of the Northern Song. There's no point to imprisoning its emperor any longer."

—My little friend.
Jilgus. I'm glad it's to be you.



She wasn't such a decent woman after all, was she? Not the kind to repay her debts?
—Can you see the pitiful end falling for the wolf-woman has brought you to?
TOKE
TOD

It's true... she isn't
a decent woman.

There's precious little hope left for the Western Xia—
it's already a ruined country, like Liao. A thing of the past.

That's mere sentimentality for the legacy of a dead country.

Is the Voice of Jade beautiful too, Yurul?

The Tangut script is beautiful.

its importance won't be in the past;
it will be right now.

the living nation of Jin is able to beat back the Mongols, then—
But if, with its Voice of Jade,

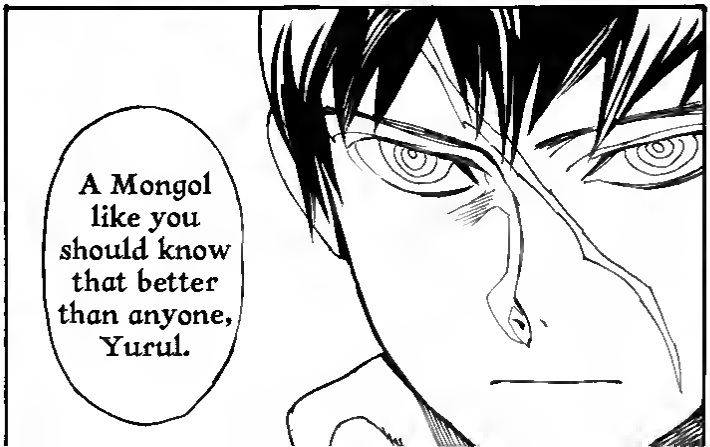
Right now becomes the past in no time, Jilgus.
That's true for the Tangut, Jin, and the Mongols.

It will become the strength of a living nation.

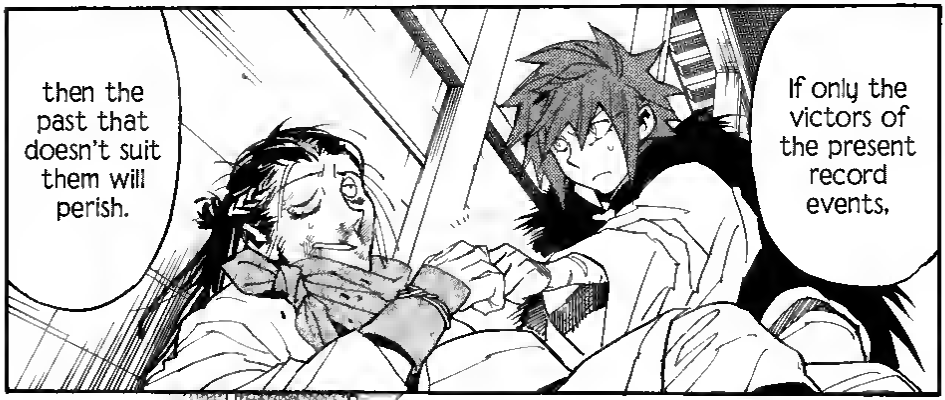
And the events and people that have become past
live on as long as there is a way to remember them.

If the Mongols have vanquished the Tangut, then that's all the more reason

I don't know the circumstances, but—
You would do better not to seek that way in the script of a vanquished country.


A Mongol like you should know that better than anyone, Yurul.

why the Tangut script must live on.


If only the victors of the present record events,
then the past that doesn't suit them will perish.

Whoever the victors are, the brushes of the losers—
for instance, brushes that record without omission things to the discredit of the victors—
And if countless new brushes continue to be born, with no regard for victor and vanquished,
if everyone takes up a brush, and chooses a way of making records...

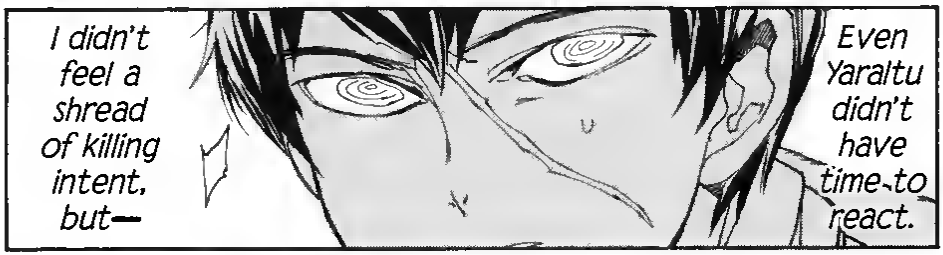
What will be saved
No.
No, will the victors cease to commit acts of dishonor?
—Will the honor of the vanquished be saved?

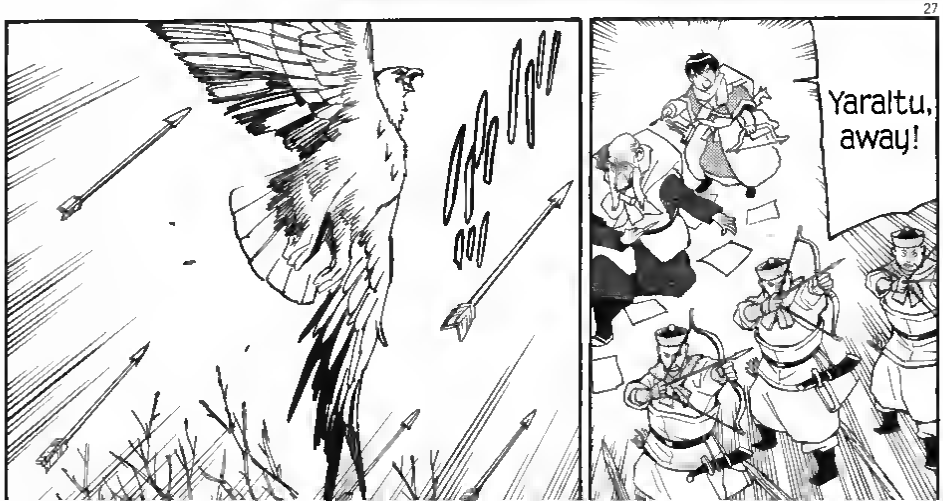
is the countless people who are killed in the conflict.

Ha ha ha! You're practically a kid, Yurul.
Countless brushes will stop swords?
Ha...
But that's a pipe dream.
Even if you try to condemn them with many brushes, the Mongols won't feel a thing.
It would take far too much time and expense for packhorse drivers and peasants and everyone else to read and write.
As long as there is that cost, the nation must first be victorious in war and protect the packhorse drivers and peasants right now.
That's what a nation is.
Right now, the wise, strong hounds protect and guide the flock of virtuous but foolish sheep.
It's been a pleasant chat.
It's time to set out, Yurul.

Boldu!
!!!!!
SCREE

Wait your turn, manservant!
Your soul is still pure.
I must— dispatch you without suffering.


I didn't feel a shread of killing intent, but—
Even Yaraltu didn't have time to react.


Yaraltu, away!

!?
As I thought, the Voice of Jade is too much for one
with more thought for the past than for the present.
...Yurul.
Your pipe dream... is drowning in sentiment...
That's wrong.
...Sudoh!
What!? The gun-powder—
WHINNEY
Uwaa-aahhh!
That was incredible, Yurul.
What you're looking at,
what you're talking about,

lies be-
yond the
present.

CLANG
...If everyone starts to write their own stories,
then they'll each come to know all those different experiences, ways of feeling, and ways of thinking.
And then if they each start writing again, and that sort of thing spreads,
if it keeps spreading, even-tually—
maybe countries will no longer belong
to just a group of important people.
I'm sure it'll take time, but...

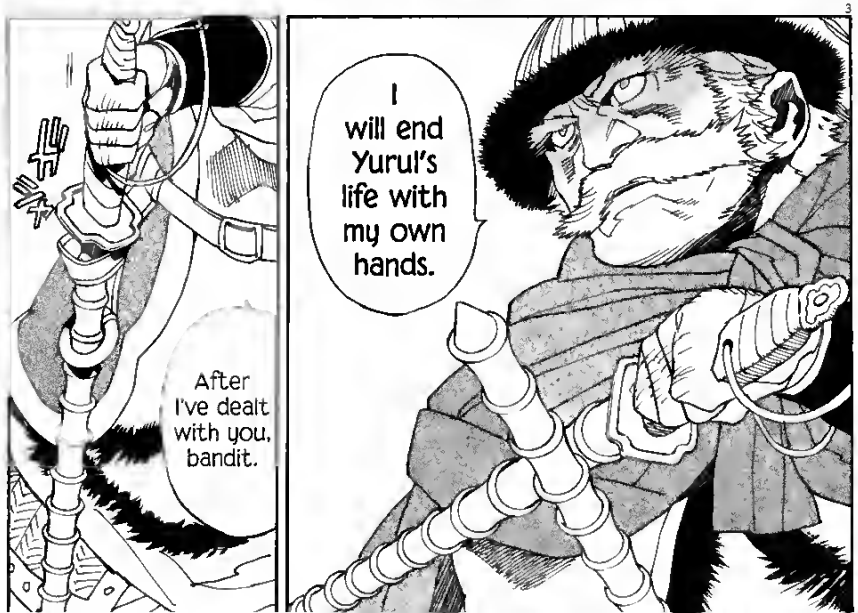
but Yurul, that's where I came from.
What you're looking towards isn't a dream or senti-ment;
It's a future that will become reality.

SHUT HELL
By Itoh Yu
Translation: OtherSideofSky
Cleaning: Riron Wakabayashy
Lettering & Redraws: Nethandle
happyscans.blogspot.com

[Chapter XXXIX] Nonsense

I don't know you you are,
A woman... From the Western Xia?
but if you harm my soldiers, I'll show you no mercy.
Don't act so high and mighty!
You were going to kill Yurul, weren't you?

[Chapter XXXIX] Nonsense



She's trying to buy the child a chance to escape, heedless of the danger to herself.
Her thinking is superficial, like a beast's.

RATTLE
RATTLE
Ngh ...!

She's faster than I expected.

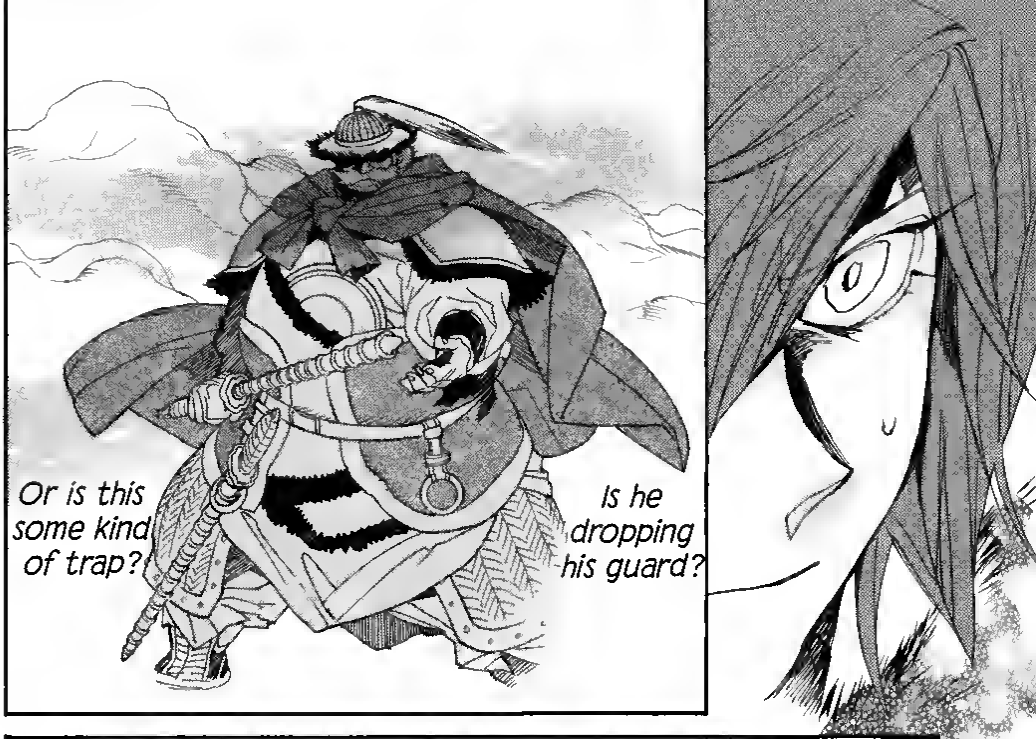
PUFF
HUFF
Something I keep catching brief glimpses of.
There's something about this woman...
A light swing followed by a sudden thrust without hesitation—
Like the fangs of a beast.

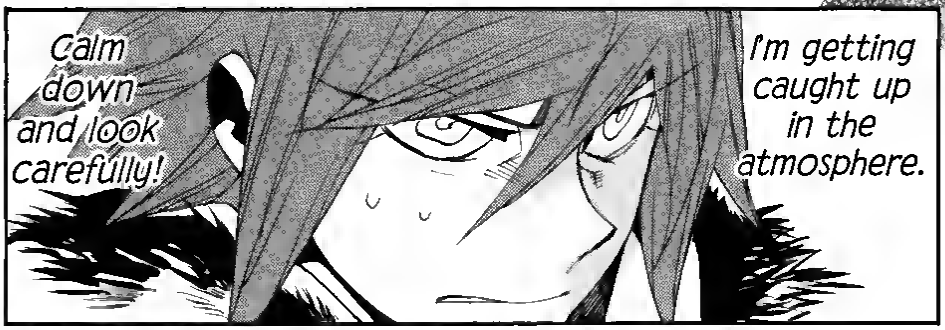
6

but this Mongol youth will become a vengeful specter.
I wouldn't expect a bandit like you to understand,
He's too strong and fast for a man his age.
This guy's scary.
He's not even breathing hard...

People made drunk on talk of dreams die.
Just like you're about to right here.

It will be this one, empty hand
that brings you down.


Or is this some kind of trap?
Is he dropping his guard?


Calm down and look carefully!
I'm getting caught up in the atmosphere.

Not good...

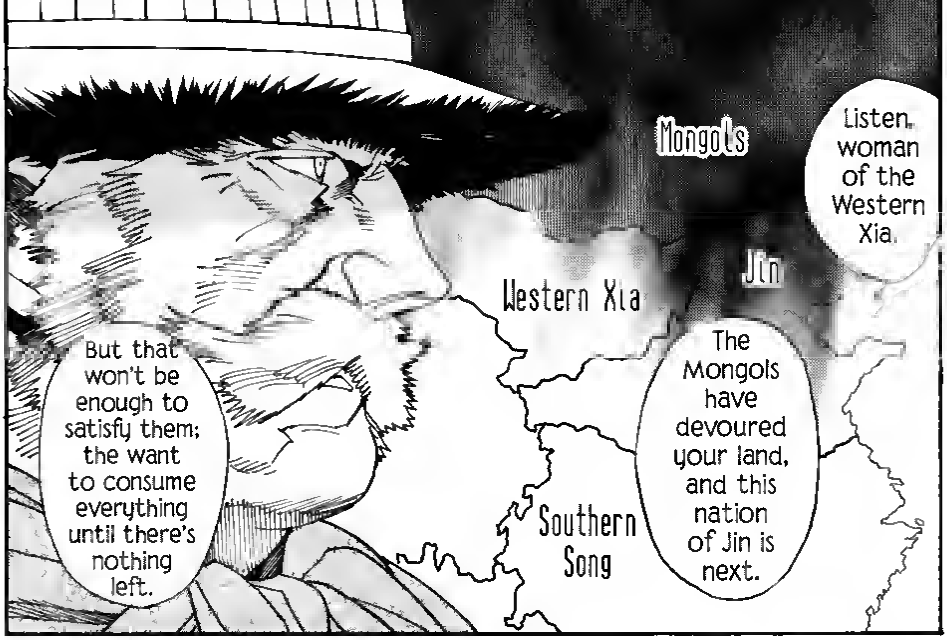
Watch out!
Be more careful, idiot!
Sorry!

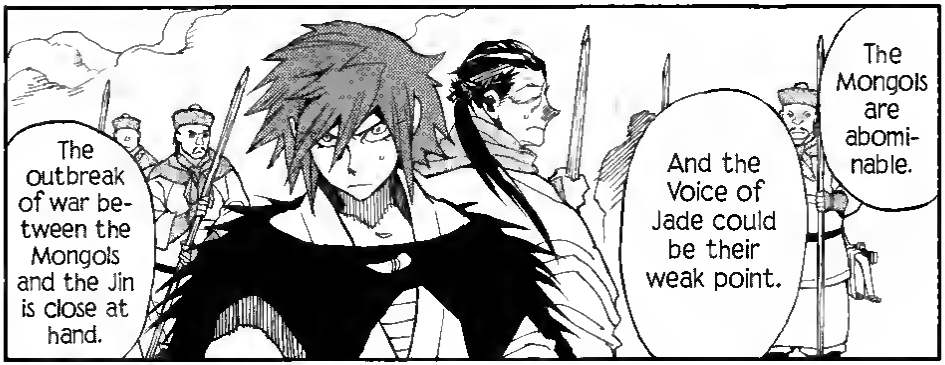
Ah, Ibaha.
I had heard you'd been lavishing favors on a woman of the Western Xia.
I see that woman...
was the female bandit I've heard so many rumors about.

—Huh ...?
The immortal man. That's who "Shut Hell" is.
"Shut Hell," the Mongol-killer.
The Tangut bandit said to have returned from the dead after being hanged—

HUFF
Why?
PUFF
GLANCE
"Shut Hell...?"

Why won't you come out, Shut Hell—!?
Is it because I'm not fighting Mongols!?


Mongols
Jin
Western Xia
Southern Song
Listen, woman of the Western Xia.
The Mongols have devoured your land, and this nation of Jin is next.
But that won't be enough to satisfy them; the want to consume everything until there's nothing left.


The Mongols are abominable.
And the Voice of Jade could be their weak point.
The outbreak of war between the Mongols and the Jin is close at hand.

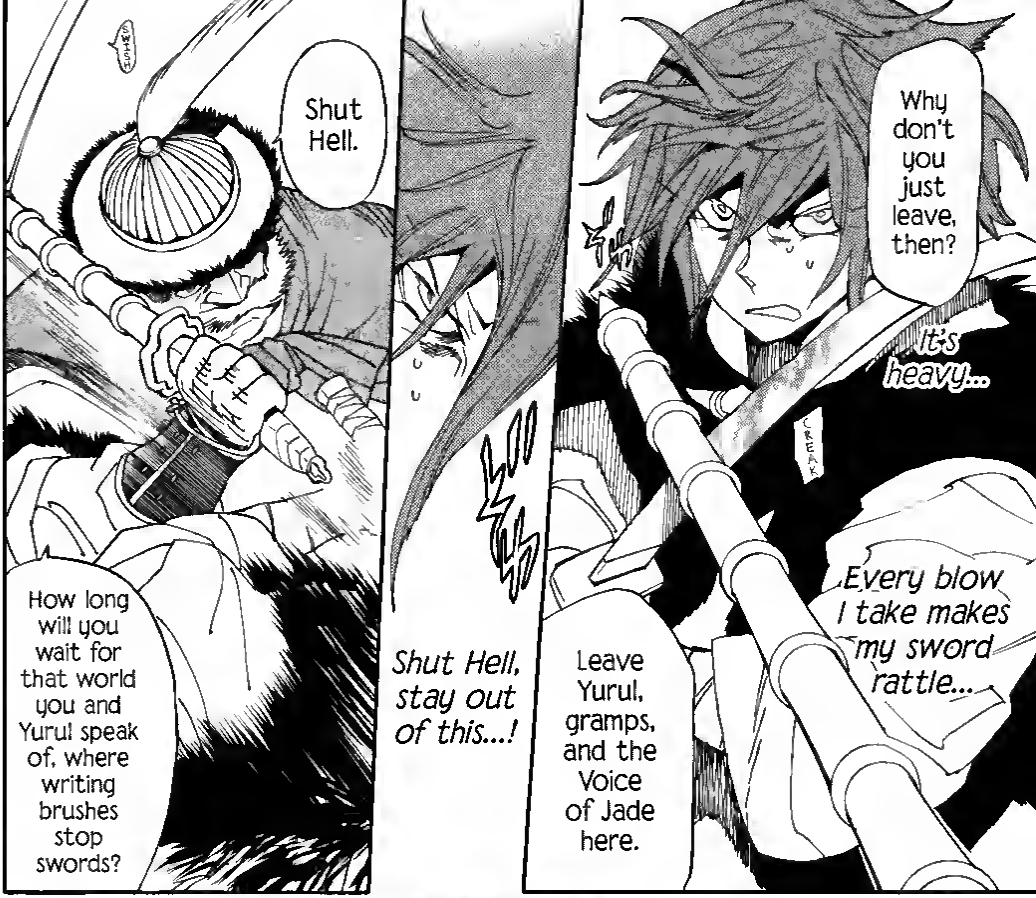
For that reason, the Voice of Jade must reach our capital, Chengdu, as soon as possible.
It is no longer something we can afford to entrust to the empty dreams of a child.
Not as long as the dread Mongol tiger approaches in pursuit of it.

The Mongol... tiger.

"Harabal."
They know the tiger's name...?
For the Tsog to pursue the Voice of Jade would be...
It must be on the Mongol's orders.
The tiger... So it really is Harabal.

General!
Then the "tiger" is... a criminal?
North towards Xingqing. The Tsog tribe, who appeared to be of importance to the Mongols, have been executed following a revolt
The Tsog...

The advance scouts have confirmed mounted figures that appear to be Mongol scouts!
WHINNY
So you've come running, tiger!
13
Damn you, Shut Hell.
This force was assembled to hunt the tiger, not you.
I must defeat you swiftly and hurry on to the hunting grounds.


Why don't you just leave, then?
It's heavy...
Every blow I take makes my sword rattle...
Leave Yurul, gramps, and the Voice of Jade here.
Shut Hell, stay out of this...!
Shut Hell.
How long will you wait for that world you and Yurul speak of, where writing brushes stop swords?

He's aiming for my jaw with his hilt!
...Eight hundred years. About that long.
So it's nonsense after all.

If guys like him die, it'll probably take even longer!

Then I'll kill him!
CLANK
CLANK
CLANK
!...!

—A vision!
Yu-rul!!

18
You were finished by my one, empty hand.

I said I would finish Yurul with my own hands, did I not, Shut Hell?
The soldiers all knew that.
Just now... was that her true nature?
Part of you is still soft, and because of that you're just going to die again.
That presence, like a beast's...
19
Yurul.
Su-doh ...!
Su-doh!

PROD
If you want to save her, answer truthfully.
You are aquainted with Shut Hell, are you not?
For what reason do you know the "tiger's" name?
And Shut Hell's...
He's my enemy.
Take them with us. Don't injure them.
Rejoice, serving-man.
Very well.
Boldu!
...They were born into the same tribe and called brothers.

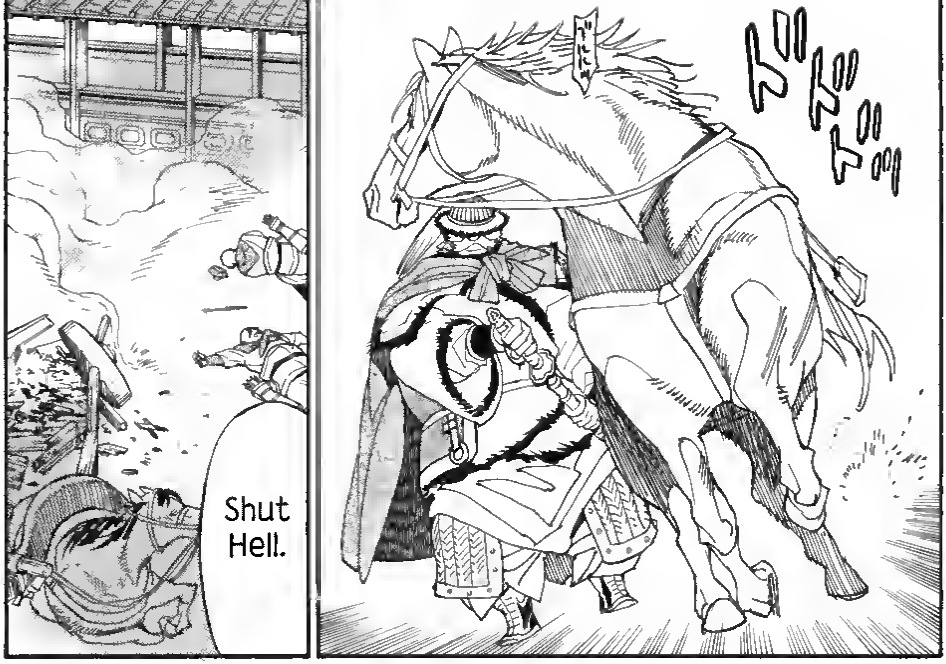
At the moment, your master's life depends on making me believe that.
If they're related, he may have information on the "tiger." And we can use him as a hostage.
You have served your master well.
Thank you for your trouble.
Our business is at an end.

Su-doh...
You don't have to... reflect on what you've done...
—What a foolish way to die!

...So, he means to cling to me.
MMMMGGG
ガラガラ
ガラガラ
ガラガラ

Go, Sudoh!
Boy!

Master Yuru!
The remaining troops are to hurry east to join up with us.
We'll make contact with the Mongols soon.
PHWEET


Shut Hell.

I have even less interest in you than I did before.
Take good care of that life you picked up.

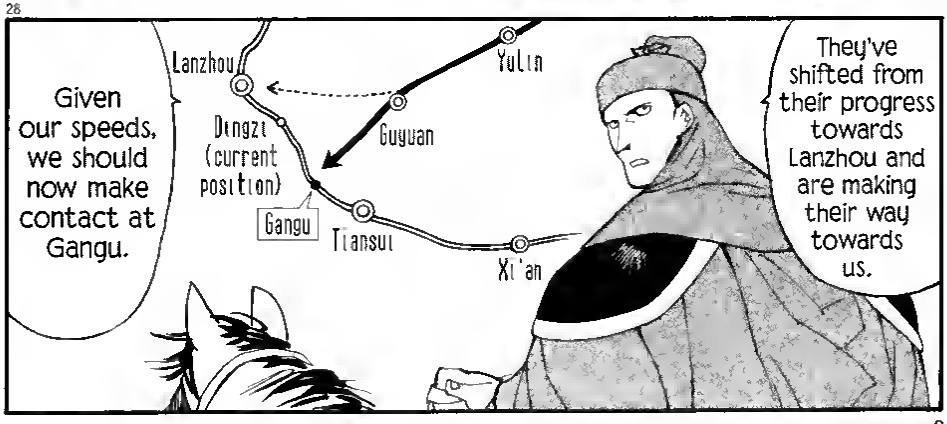
The hand she struck is still partially numb.

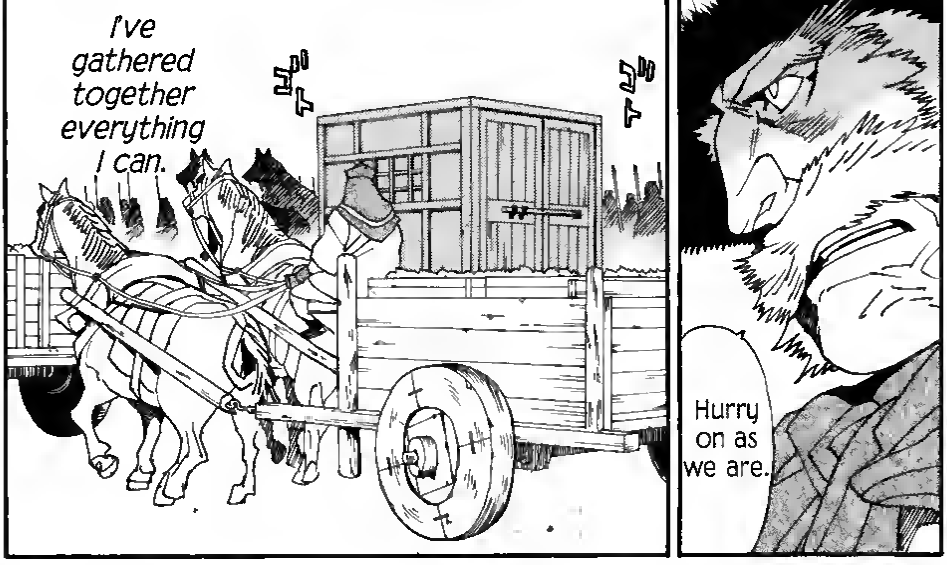
—So, "Shut Hell."

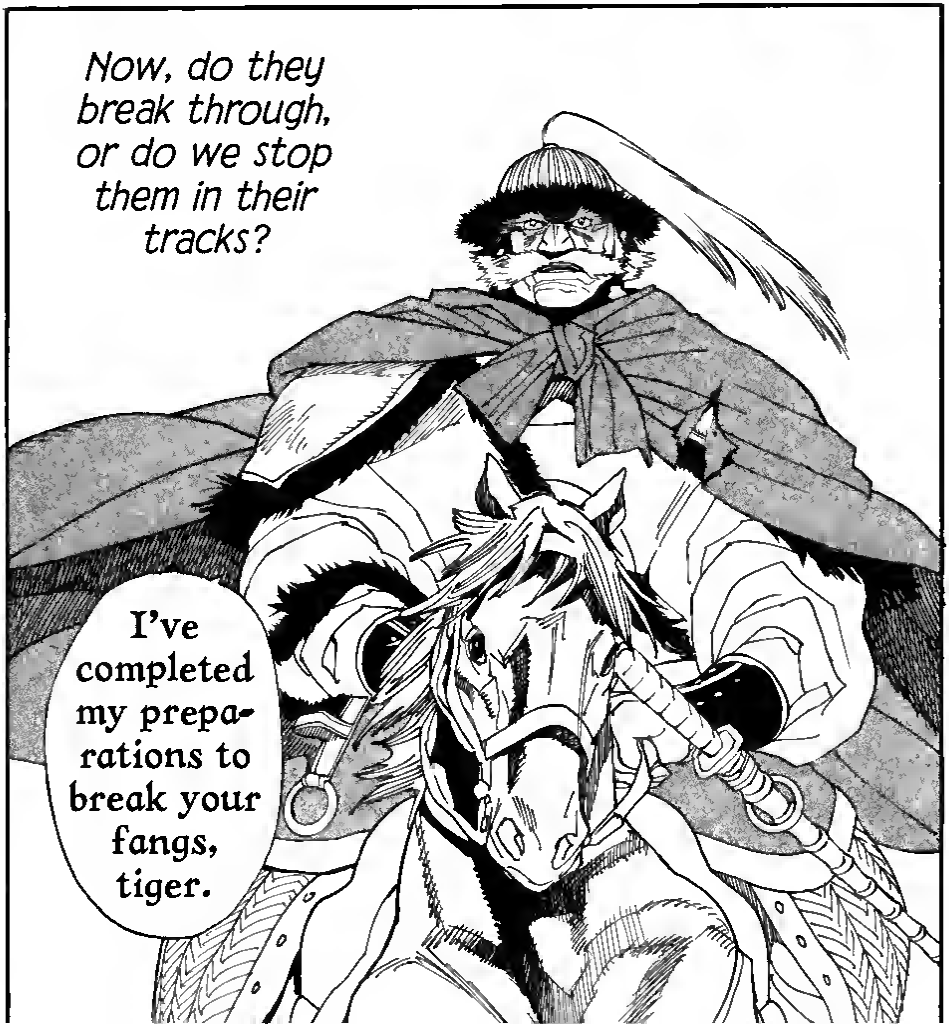
Lord Jilgus, you've arrived!
What of the tiger? What do the scouts say?

I left without being able to deal with her,
but right now, time is of the essence.

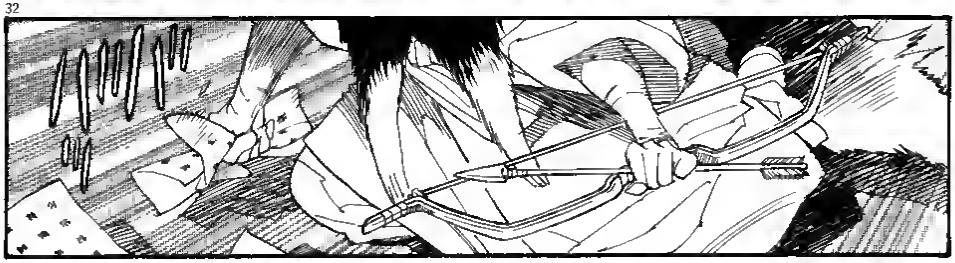
28


Given our speeds, we should now make contact at Gangu.
Lanzhou
Dingzi (current position)
Gangu
Guyuan
Yulin
Tiansui
Xi'an
They've shifted from their progress towards Lanzhou and are making their way towards us.


I've gathered together everything I can.
Hurry on as we are.


Now, do they break through, or do we stop them in their tracks?
I've completed my preparations to break your fangs, tiger.

If there were a world like that—
On your own, even you will probably die there.
Ibaha.
You went after Yurul, didn't you?
...My voice won't come out...
...Ibaha.
Iba-ha...
I might be able to see you again soon, Sudoh...



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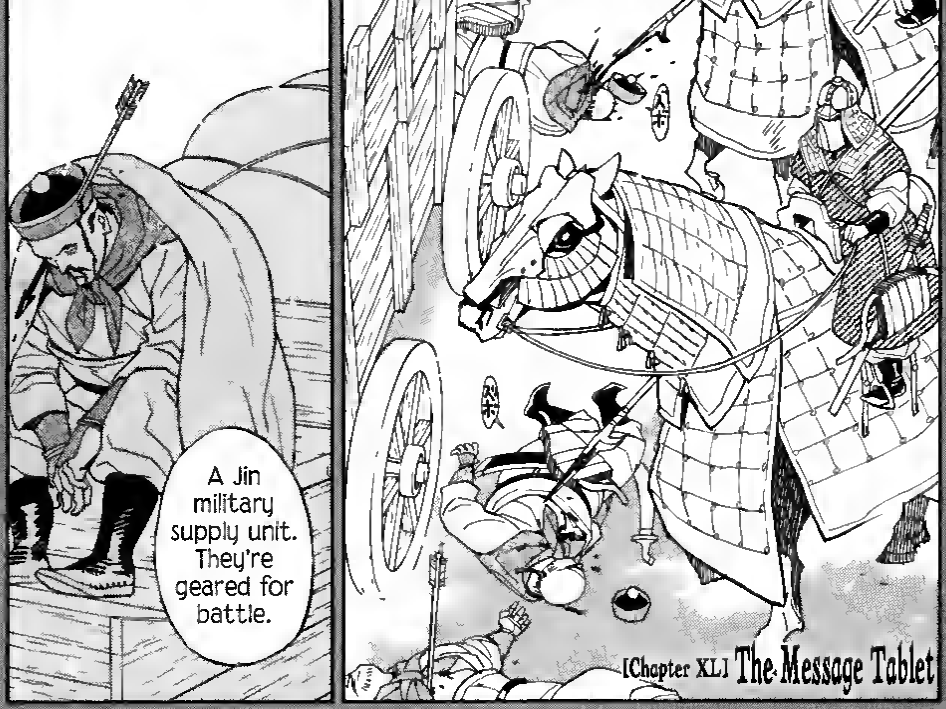

A Jin military supply unit. They're geared for battle.

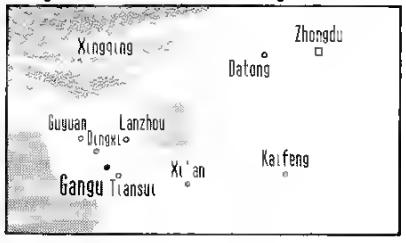
They aren't the troops pursuing us.

[Chapter XL] The Message Tablet

Everyone wait enough so that you don't get slow on your feet.

The road goes through the mountains for a while in this region.

Gangu—50km East of Jilgus' forces

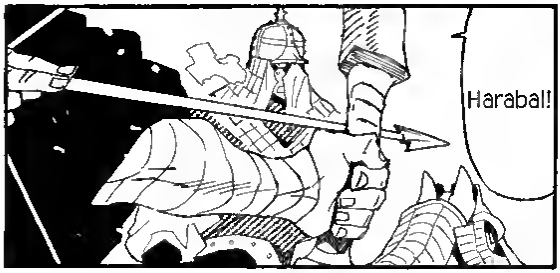


Hurry. They're advancing further west.

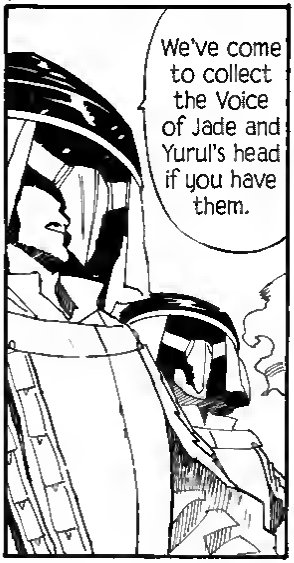
Harabal, wait.
but if you keep pressing ahead at this speed, there will be stragglers.
Every one of us is prepared.
but this is enemy territory, and we've no guides.
I've heard that a Jin force abducted a Mongol child from Lanzhou...
We can't even see into the mist ahead. It's almost like—
He's pushing deep into Jin territory without hesitation.

...Like he's caught his younger brother's scent.
I'll make for them alone.
This is far enough.

We've been looking for you, Melgen.


Harabal!

Veronika's subordinates.


We've come to collect the Voice of Jade and Yurul's head if you have them.

State your business.
HOH!

And to deliver a message if you do not.

...There has been a gathering of all the Mongolian tribes,
and there all the chiefs swore to obey the Great Khan in a military expedition against the Jin.

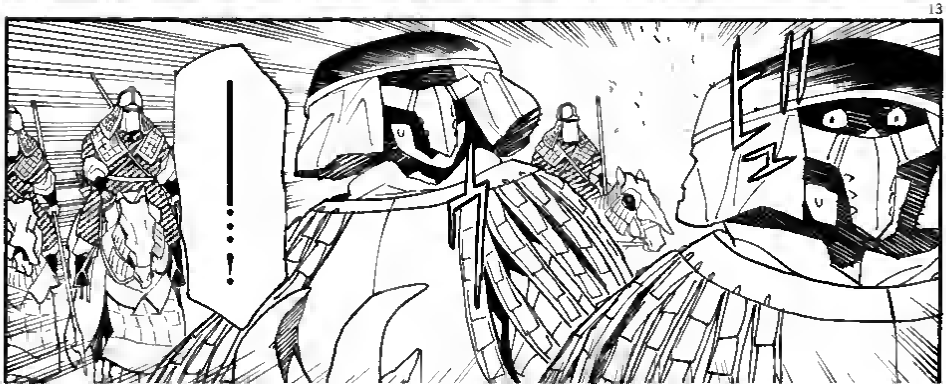
Melgen
I bring a message from Lady Veronika.
The Tsog know nothing of this.
War begins in spring. You are to return with the Voice of Jade by then.
Surely the important battlefield is not here in the west, but east around Zhongdu, Datong, and Liaoyang.
Liaoyang
Datong
Zhongdu
Lanzhou
Gongu
Tsansui
Xi'an
Kaifeng
so that his strength may serve the Great Khan.
He must hasten to join us

If Harabal should betray the Mongols again,
it will be written that the Tsog have comitted a sin for which they can never atone.
What arbitrary orders!
Was it not she who ordered us here to the Lanzhao region?

This is enemy territory.
There'd be nothing strange about two or three horsemen going missing.
...We will not overlook such discourtesy to our lord.
May we, Harabal?

...You say it will be "written?"
The Mongols will make letters, Melgen.
Precisely.
That woman...
does she aspire to become a minister of state?
That is Lady Veronika's new duty.
This is the tablet of a mounted messenger.

The routes we mounted messengers take are reported.
If they are cut off, you will not escape suspicion, riders of the Melgen.
Wherever one is within the empire, and however much it expands,
this will be a symbol of Mongol authority.
By the imperial command of the Great Khan!
The insubordinate, whosoever they are, shall be executed!
You mean to make a thing like that which you burn?



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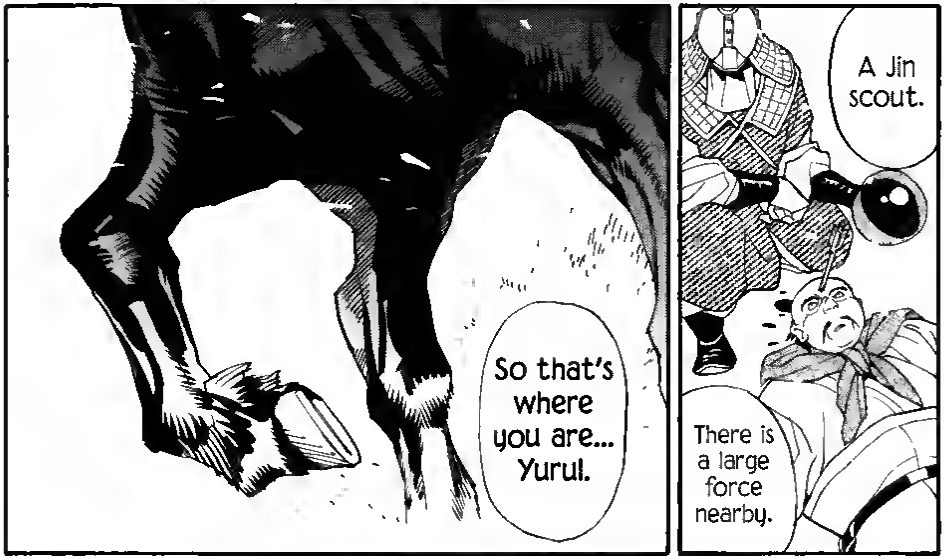
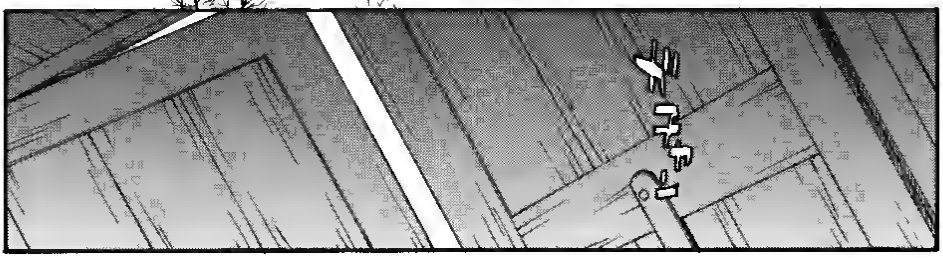

A Jin scout.
There is a large force nearby.
So that's where you are... Yurui.

We're going.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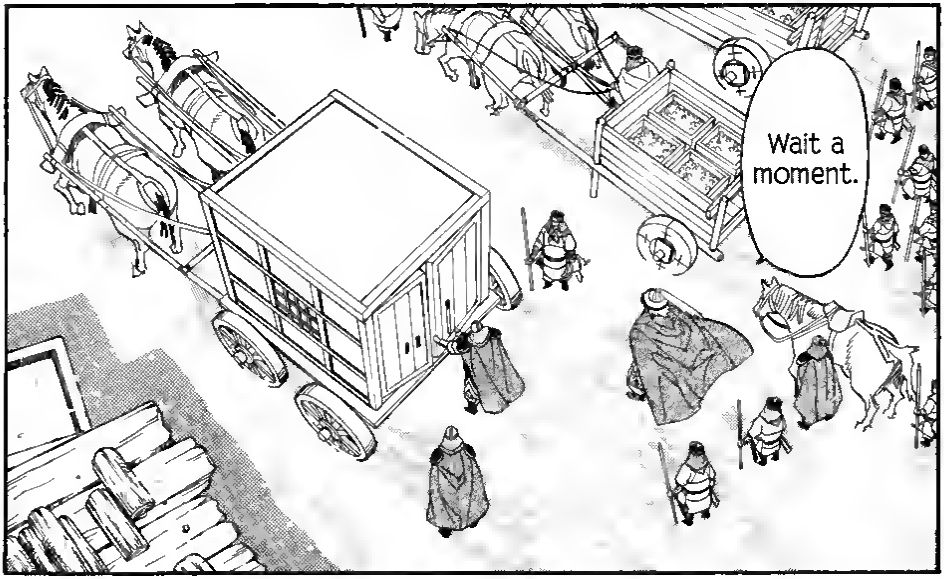
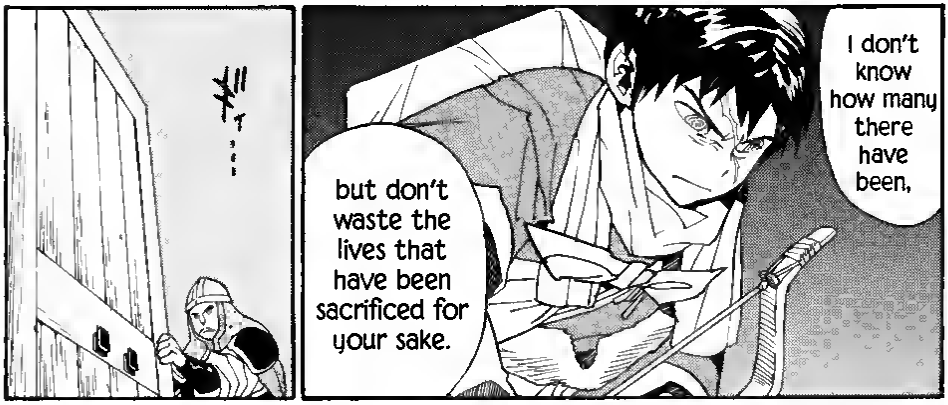

Wait a moment.

Yurul.

If you plan to leap out and find a way of escape, give it up.

You'll die a dog's death, as will your servingman.
I won't be caught unaware.


I don't know how many there have been,
but don't waste the lives that have been sacrificed for your sake.

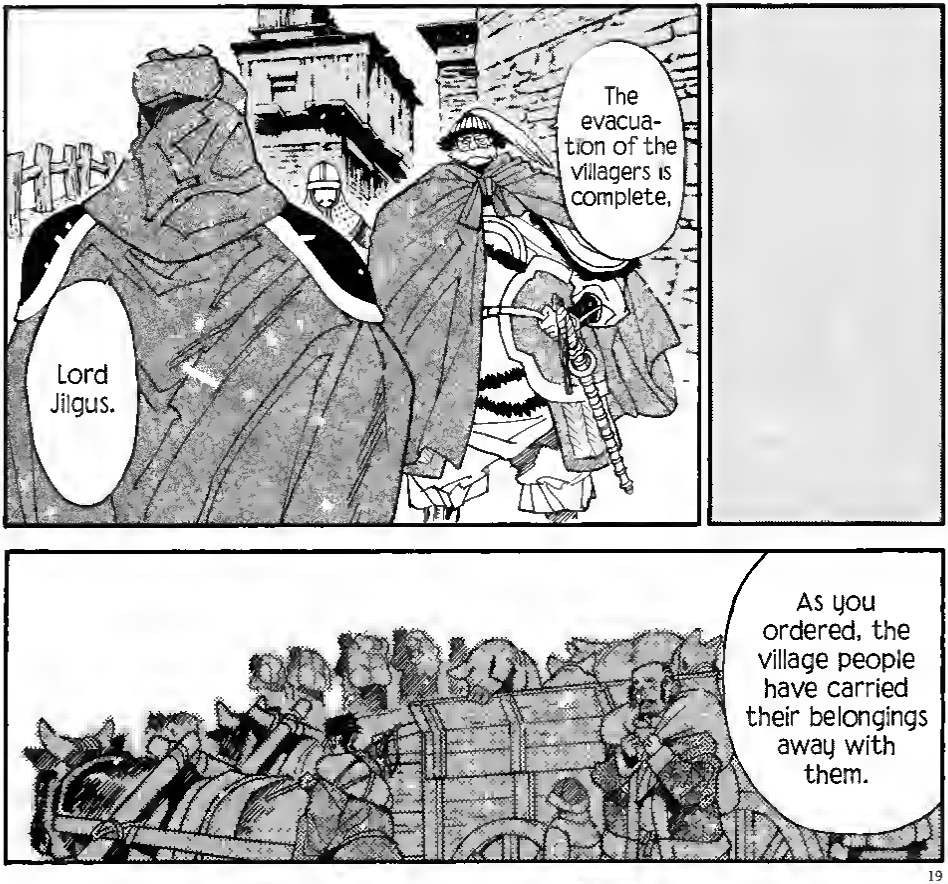
If, as you say, the Tsog "tiger" is your enemy, then endure and live on.
I might give you an opportunity to shoot him.

You...
!
You weave in a little of your true feeling to make others believe you,
but your words are chosen only for your own ends.
You speak well.
You're cold and cruel.
I think I can stand being condemned by a child.
Shall I silence him?
It's fine.

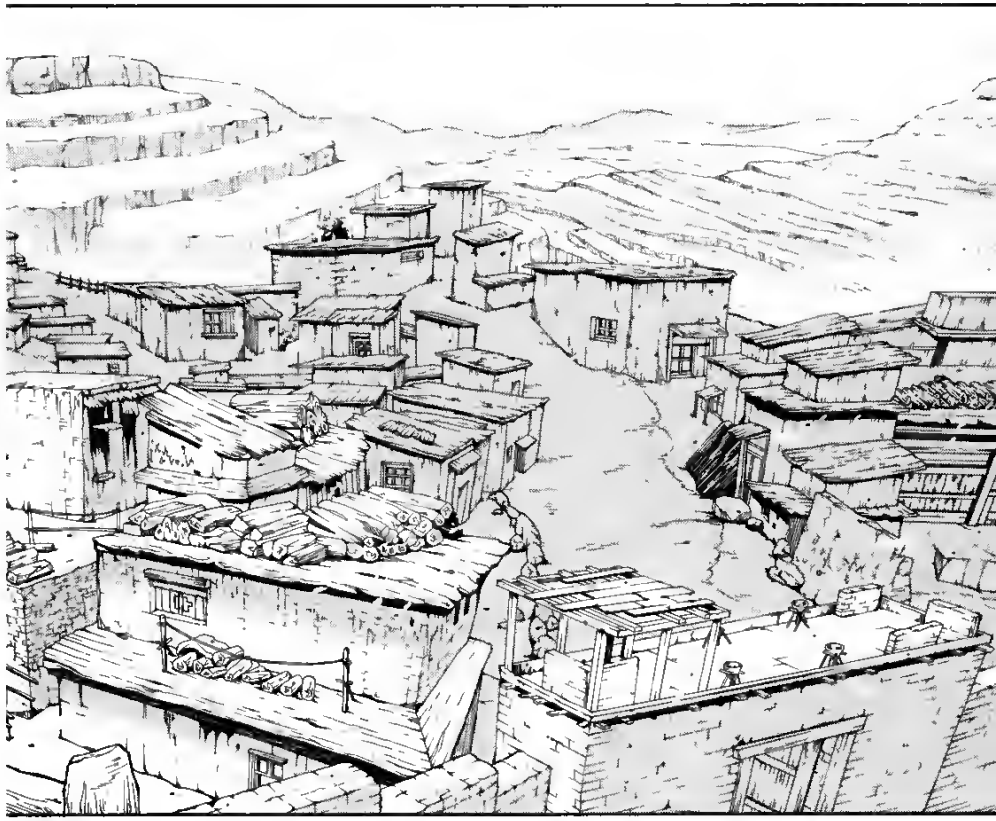
If I don't forget one, a hundred will follow.
You intend to calmly forget him and move on.
Ibaha seemed to like you.

Are you sure you don't think you're a king?
That again!

Kings are not as I am.


Lord Jilgus.
The evacuation of the villagers is complete,
As you ordered, the village people have carried their belongings away with them.

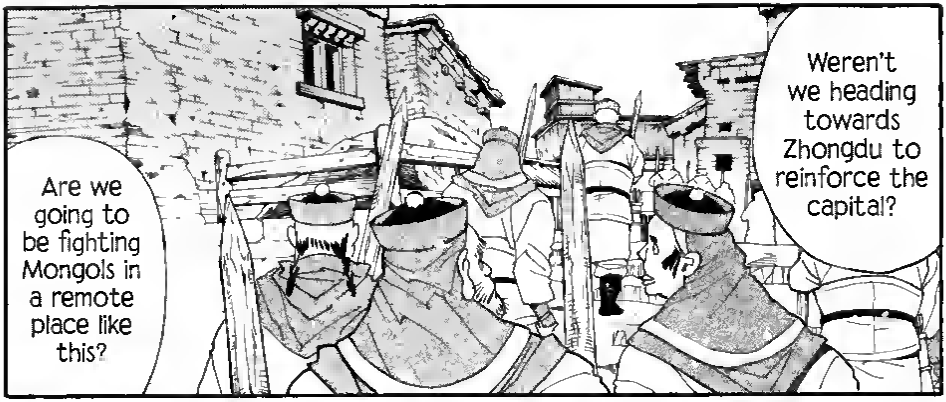
And snow is falling on the tiger as well...
Visibility is poor.
About thirty percent are late to arrive due to snow and fog.
Troops are taking their stations as they arrive, but the roads are mountainous.

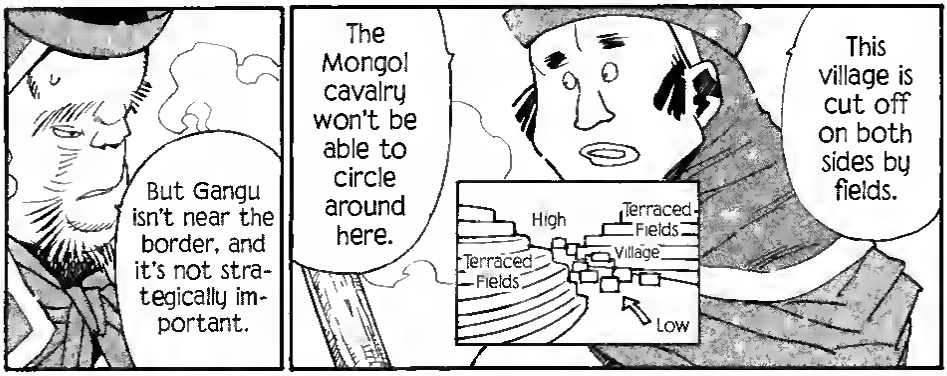

20

21

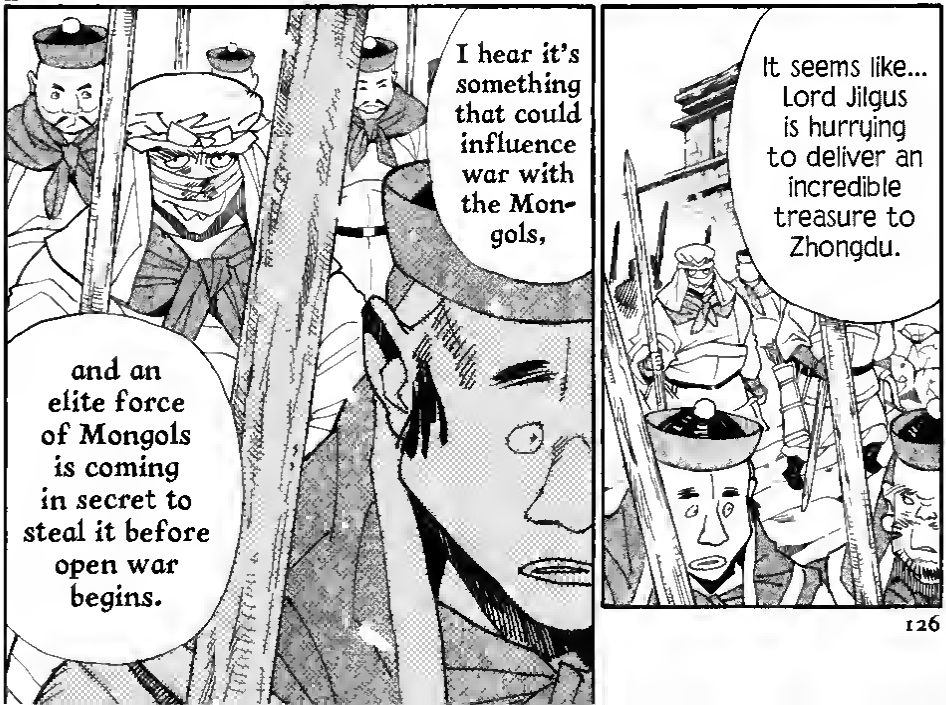
We have our location.

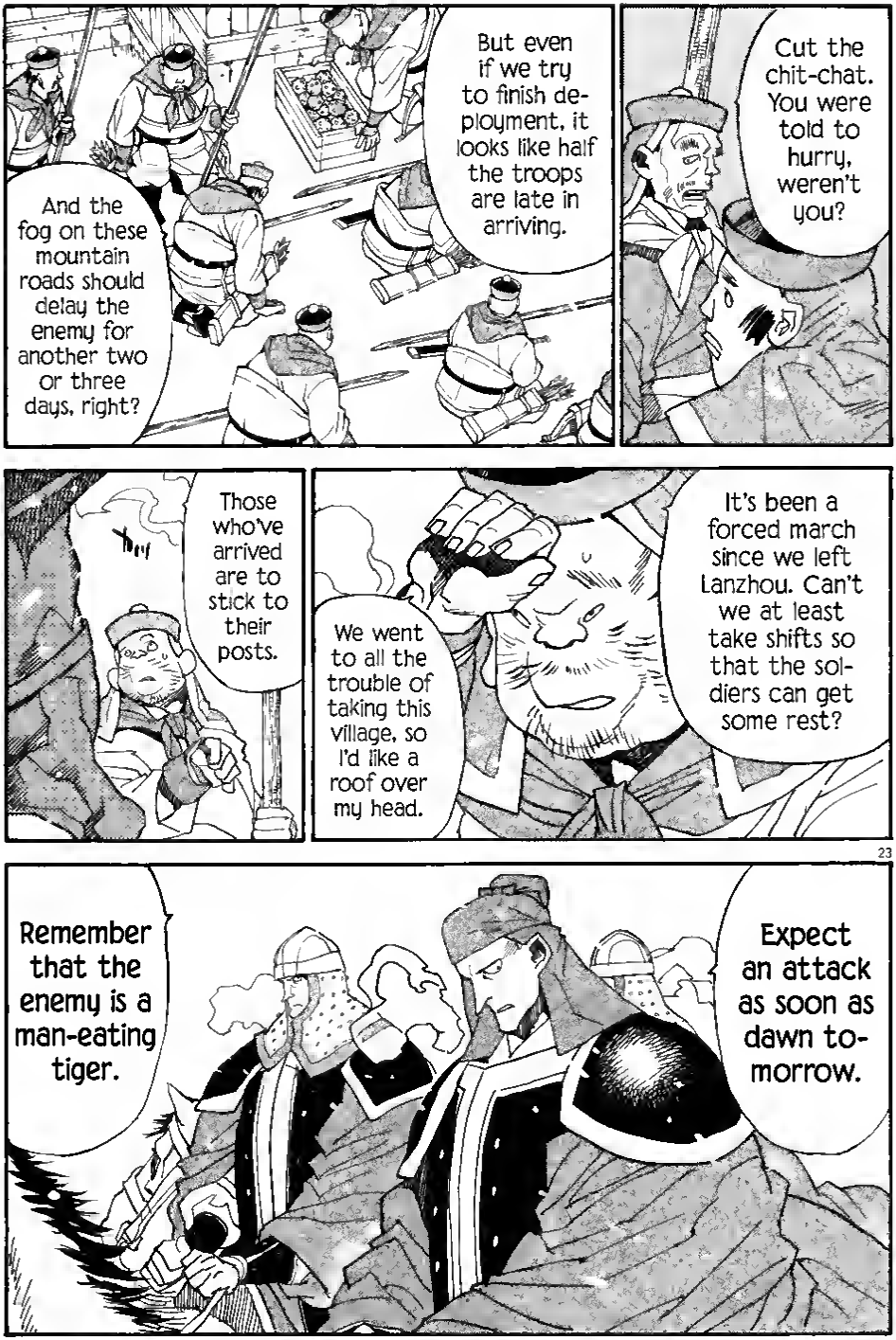
Now I want to make the most of our advantage here on the high ground.
I'll make them hurry.

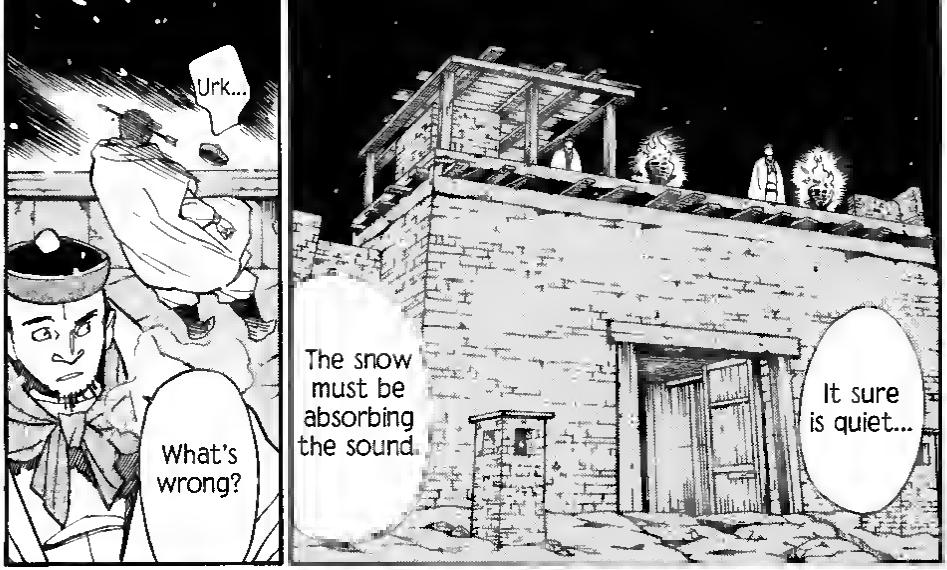

Are we going to be fighting Mongols in a remote place like this?
Weren't we heading towards Zhongdu to reinforce the capital?

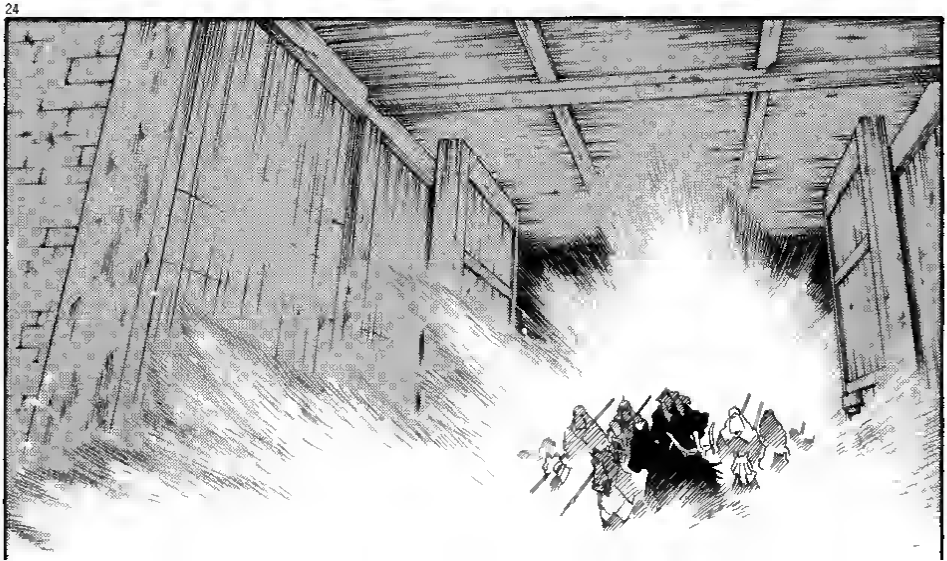

But Gangu isn't near the border, and it's not strategically important.
The Mongol cavalry won't be able to circle around here.
This village is cut off on both sides by fields.
High
Terraced Fields
Village
Terraced Fields
Low

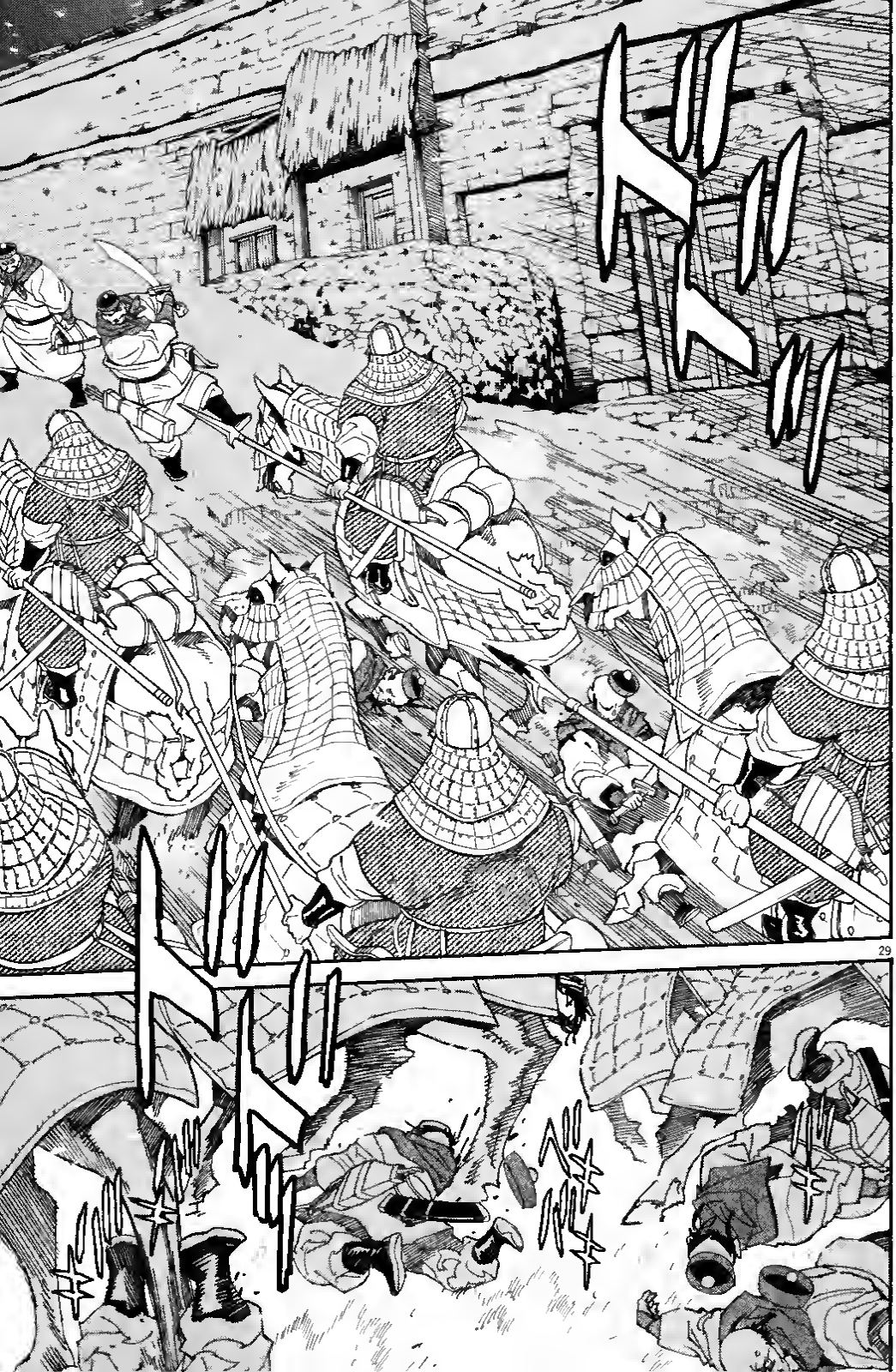
22


I hear it's something that could influence war with the Mongols,
and an elite force of Mongols is coming in secret to steal it before open war begins.
It seems like... Lord Jilgus is hurrying to deliver an incredible treasure to Zhongdu.


And the fog on these mountain roads should delay the enemy for another two or three days, right?
But even if we try to finish deployment, it looks like half the troops are late in arriving.
Cut the chit-chat. You were told to hurry, weren't you?
Those who've arrived are to stick to their posts.
We went to all the trouble of taking this village, so I'd like a roof over my head.
It's been a forced march since we left Lanzhou. Can't we at least take shifts so that the soldiers can get some rest?
23
Remember that the enemy is a man-eating tiger.
Expect an attack as soon as dawn tomorrow.


Urk...
What's wrong?
The snow must be absorbing the sound.
It sure is quiet...



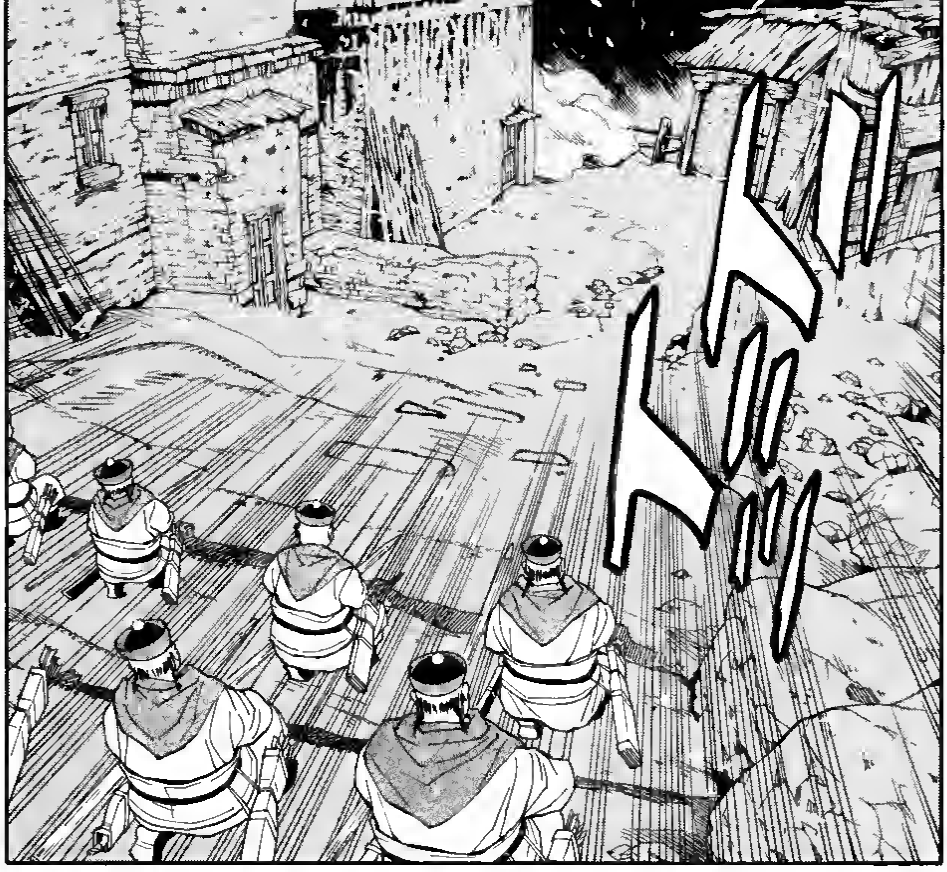

ドドド

I understand.
A night raid...?
Lord Jilgus, it's the Mongols!

And yet they make a night raid while the snow obscures their vision?
From the tiger's point of view, this is unknown territory.

Harabal.

The slope is steep and covered in snow. The horses' momentum won't last long.
To your posts!
Those spears you sharpened yourselves will save your lives.
Because they are a small force, they try to dazzle us with a night raid.
Do not fear the echo of their horses' hooves.



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SHUT HELL
By Itoh Yu
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Cleaning: Riron Wakabayashy
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[Chapter XLI] Night Raid

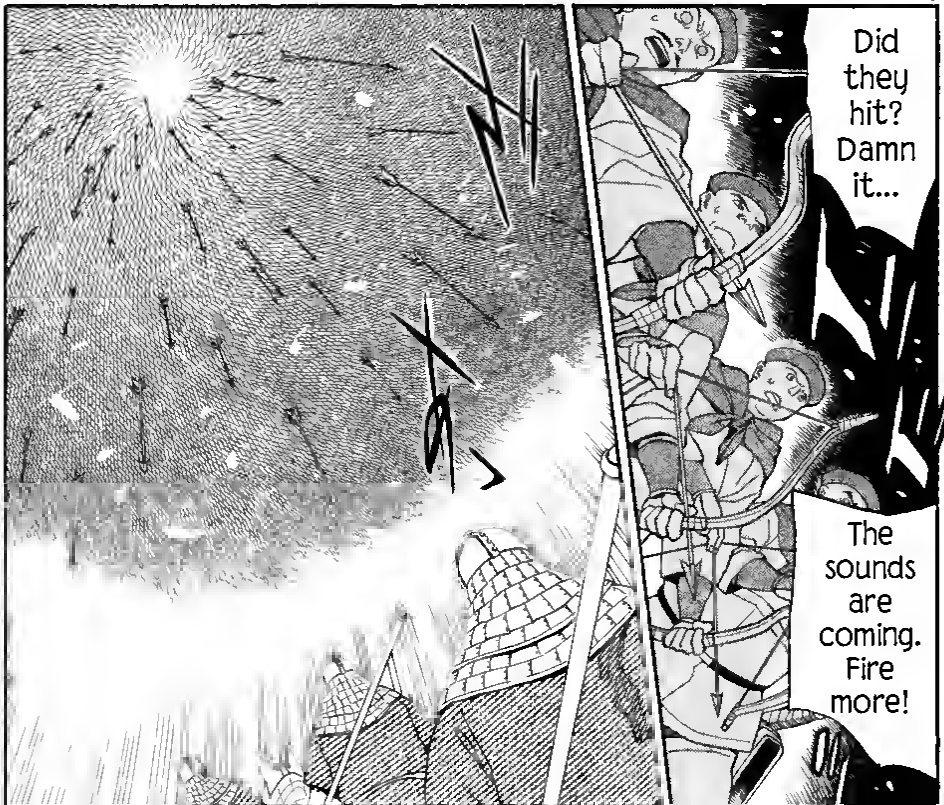
【第四拾壱話】夜襲

I can see them faintly, but the sounds are muffled...

2

Draw your bows.
Divide up the bombs. One per person.
Use the explosions to draw the enemy until they're in the light of the bonfires!

Fire.


Did they hit? Damn it...
The sounds are coming. Fire more!

CLANG
CLANG
CLANG
CLANG

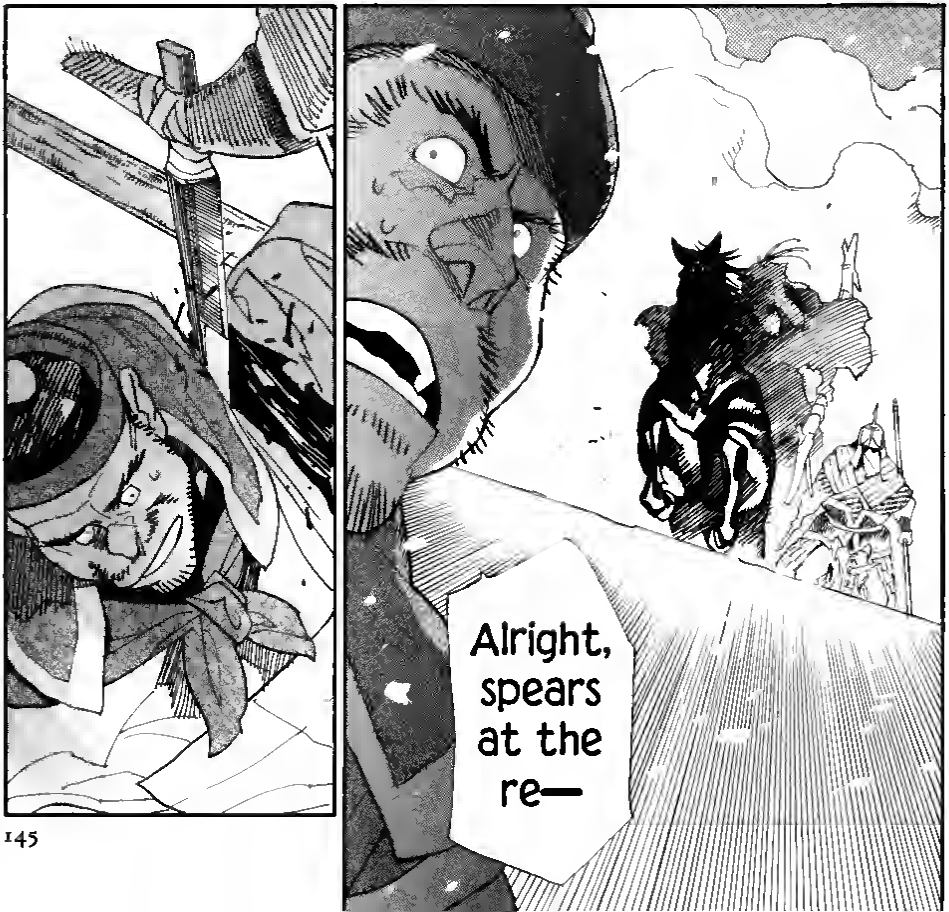
—But I never thought they'd be this ready for us.
Ha!
The bow-strings of the Jin are loose.
They're still plunging ahead.
It can't be— at least one arrow must have hit them!
...Ready the bombs!
We have two objectives. The Voice of Jade is most likely in the deepest part of the enemy camp,
which seems to be situated in the building overlooking this village.
As for the child, whether he's living under the enemy's roof or was captured I can't say.

It's also possible that they've stolen the Voice of Jade and killed him, but—
It doesn't matter if he's alive as long as he has a head to take.
—!
The arrows have stopped.
I smell gunpowder.
The rest of you fall back.

CRACK
Wa-ahh!
The bon-fires!
The enemy is right there!
Shit, light them! Light the bombs.
7
M... My bomb is damp!
CLICK
CLICK
CLACK
Use the burning bits of wood there!
Wait, they're still too far away!

Uoo-
hhh!
WHINNEY
WHINNEY

Even if it didn't cause fatal injuries directly,
there's no horse that wouldn't shy at that noise.
D... Did we get them?


Alright, spears at the re—

different animals entirely ...!?
Are Mongol horses
Im... possi- ble...

What did they mean to accomplish by tossing little fireworks at random?
Did they think that would stop our horses?
And we shouldn't drive our horses up a snowy hill at this pace for long.
But if it weren't night, we would have had casualties.
12
Numbers will end this more quickly, and our horses are sufficiently bold.
Harabal, I know I've said this before, but we'll accompany you.
And those... stakes?
So, they didn't have time to form a defensive line against cavalry?

We're cutting back and forth across this hill, aiming for the upper level of the village.
There will probably be another two or three fortified plazas like this one before we reach the top level, where the Voice of Jade seems to be.

But for cavalry, to give in to caution and lose our speed is the same as throwing away our weapons.
The poor visibility will aid us, but there are countless footholds for archers, and they probably have bombs, too.

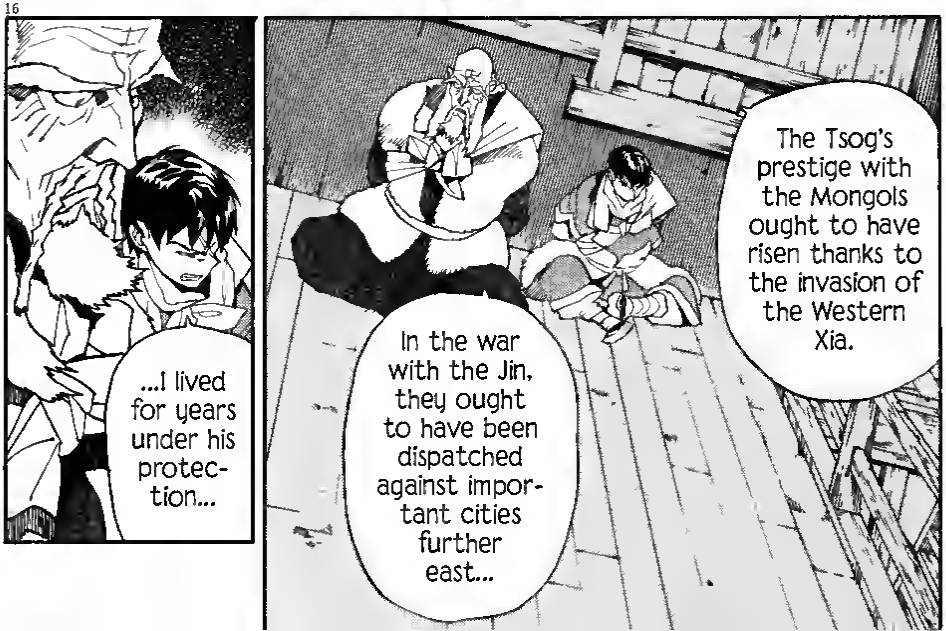
Yes sir.
Close ranks and trample them with our speed and weight.

Wa-
ah!
14
Ah
...!
CRACK

—So, gun-powder was the enemy's trump card?
No.

There's still something else.

—Why is Master Harabal here...?


...I lived for years under his protection...
In the war with the Jin, they ought to have been dispatched against important cities further east...
The Tsog's prestige with the Mongols ought to have risen thanks to the invasion of the Western Xia.

Harabal is my enemy. A merciless foe.
—I hate him... and I fear him. I can't think straight.
Will I be dragged to death by the Tsog?
Will Harabal put an end to me?
The Voice of Jade has been stolen, too.
...You should open your eyes,
and listen carefully.
Once, when you were separated from someone and didn't even know where they were, you believed that you would meet again.
This is the same.
...That's right...
Our re-union...
Yurul. What you're looking at is—

I can't let it end while I sit here shivering.
—Thank you, Boldu. You're right.
Didn't Sudoh tell me that I was looking to the future?
I'm sure Master Harabal means to take Master Yurul back to the Tsog alive...
CHAK
If the Mongol assault creates even a tiny gap in the Jin defenses, we can...
18
The tribe into which you and the tiger were born—
Yurul.
He is truly fearsome.
...So this is the Tsog tiger.

The Tsog, have been exterminated by the Mongols.
And I know the reason why.
I...

What can this bit of wood do against that fast, heavy charge!?
CLATTER
Move!
I can't take this! I don't want to die!
Waa-ahh!
Wah...
Wait! Come back!
Waa-ahh!
CLATTER
CLATTER
Waah!

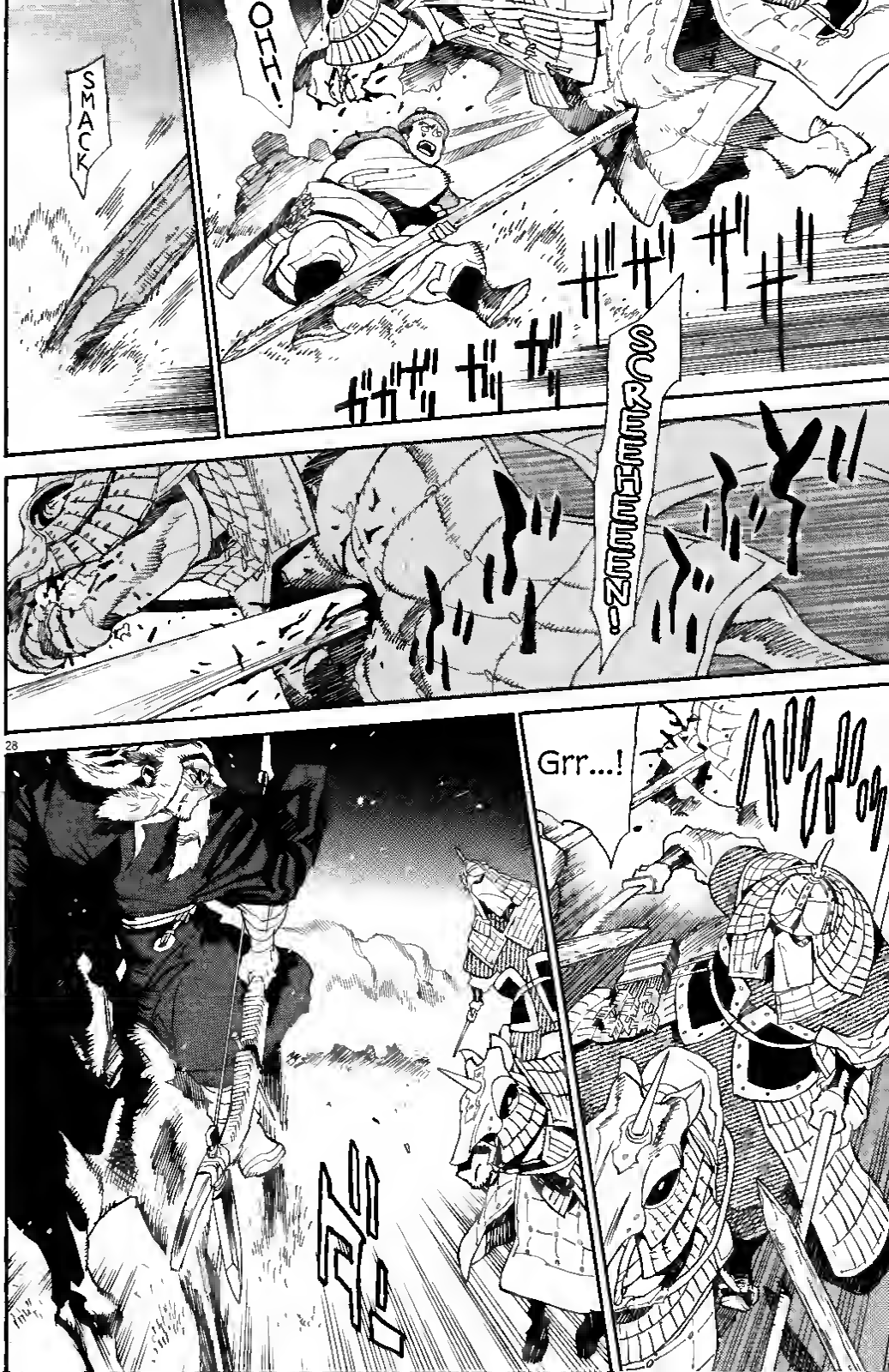
...Those stakes again.
It... it was a mistake to try to fight them!
We're all gonna be killed!
Th,
They're coming this way! Ru—

Quiet down.
If anyone tries to run, I'll break his back before the Mongols even get here.

—Form up!
Those in the back, position yourself between the men in the front line!
Put one end of your spear in the ground, and raise the other towards the enemy at waist height!
Never show your back to the enemy.
They've extinguished the fires...?

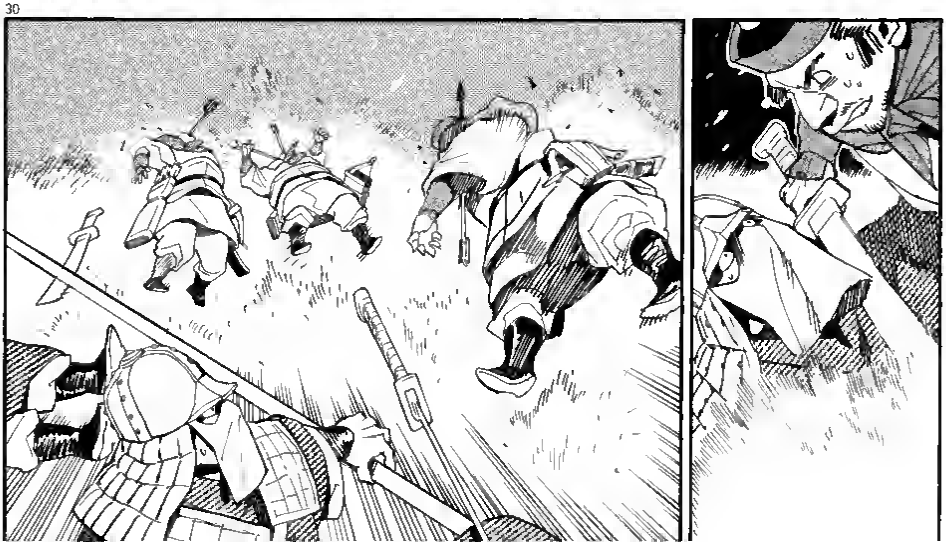
—Jump!
They've formed a line with the stakes—!

Ready spears!


SMACK
OTH!
ガガガ
Grr...!

Wa aah hhh!
SHUNNNNNNNN
SHUNNNN
Now! Get them!
SHUN
Urgh.

Do you see that!?
Their cavalry has pierced itself with its own speed and weight!



For what reason were the Tsog executed?

"It's that Voice of Jade, and... you, isn't it, Yurul?"

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[Chapter XLII] The Beast Trap

GYAAAHH

The...
The horses are...!

[Chapter XLIII] The Beast Trap
【第四拾弐話】
獣罠

This isn't just about the Voice of Jade anymore.
We'll take him here.
We must get him off that black horse. Lure him indoors.

He's a "tiger!"
I see. So, he's not a man.
He's leapt the line of spears and now he's breaking through!
A lone rider !?

If he's allowed to live, he'll definitely be a thorn in our country's side in the war to come.
Don't let the "tiger" return to the Mongols.
Everyone left, form up and retreat.
What about you?
I need to conserve my remaining arrows.
Hurry and go.
?

What of it?
It's a trap, Harabal.
A morin khuur—

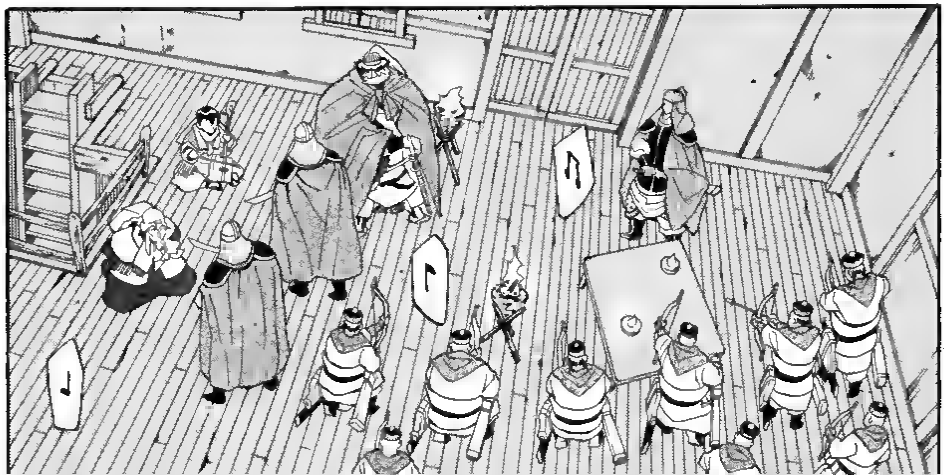
I'll be back by dawn.

Let's go.
We'll keep a path open for our lord's return.
Damn it! Here he comes.
...

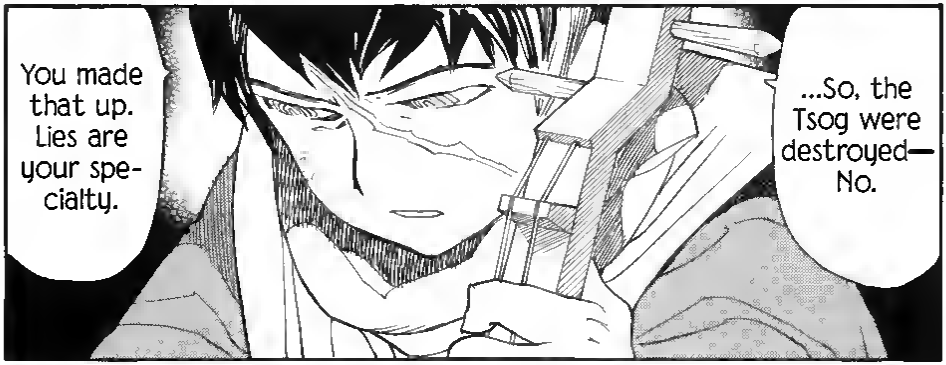
Stop him! Take your positions!

It's an old tune, but...
Fifteen arrows left.

has your sound changed, Yurul...?



—If you are brothers, you must have some feelings for each other...
Does it trouble you to call the tiger into a trap?


...So, the Tsog were destroyed— No.
You made that up. Lies are your specialty.

Yurul. You stole away with it in secret,
and for that offense, the Mongols executed the Tsog.
The Tsog must have obtained the Voice of Jade after the Tsog invasion of the Western Xia.

so that he might pursue the Voice of Jade, fueled by hatred for the younger brother who brought destruction on his tribe.
That's the fate you've brought on yourself.
But the "tiger" alone was left alive.
I believe I told you
not to use the Tangut script like that.

The last emperor of the Northern Song loved the swords of Western Xia.
He said that they did not chip or break.
But when he died, he did not even draw his sword.
He gave it into the hands of his killer.

...I pity an instrument that is never used.

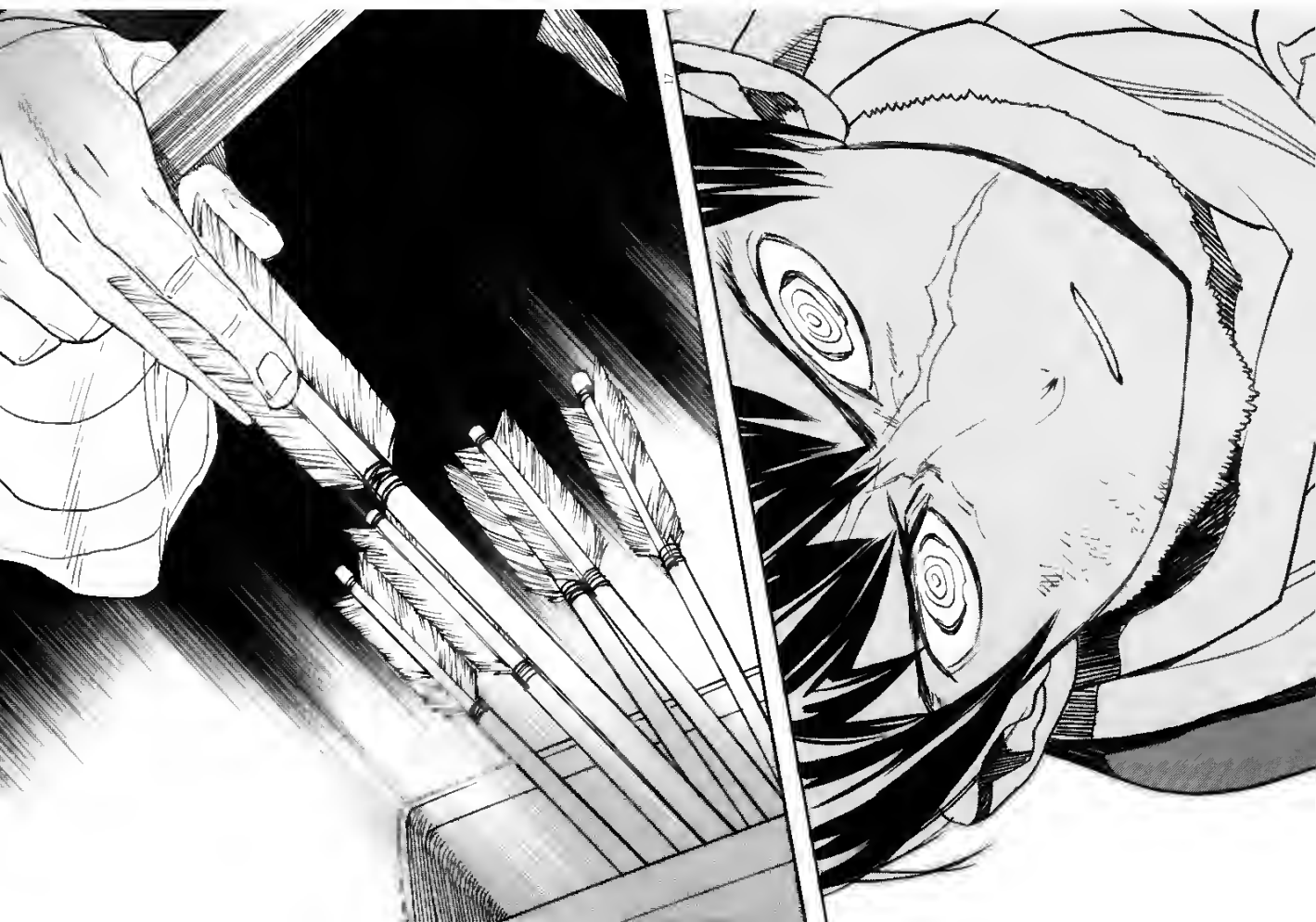
As for the jade tablets you bear,
does their story not express something?
...Nothing at all.

That's all I know about it.
that person didn't want to kill you even more than you didn't want to kill him.
But in the past, when you killed someone you didn't want to,

CRACK

But after so long with no one to save him, he no longer had even the strength of will to draw his sword.
...Here he comes.
He should have been a king.

14
15



!
Mas-
ter
Yu-
rui!

ドドドドド
バッ

Waiting so long in the backcountry,
...In one night, how many of my soldiers have you killed?
I finally had an opportunity to take the country by storm, but...
—It feels like the pressure of the air has increased...
Nngh.

I'm not in the habit of counting.

It's like I really am fighting a man-eating tiger.
There's only one head I want.

Pretty good for an old dog.
—Four arrows left.

It pierced my steel helmet!?
Rr-gh.

HACK
COUGH

...!
25
Inconceiv-able...
I can't... defeat this man.

I die here...
when a monster like you is released into battle.
The Jin imperial court is torn apart by internal power struggles.
While we have lost the way of righteous government, no help will come to us.
If we do not obtain the Voice of Jade, I doubt we have the power to even curb the Mongol advance...
No more great emperors will appear in our land.

The Mongols have a "great emperor."
To them, he is almost a god.
The next attack will be with his bow—
...One more swing and his belly will be—
Mph ...
Damn Ibaha.

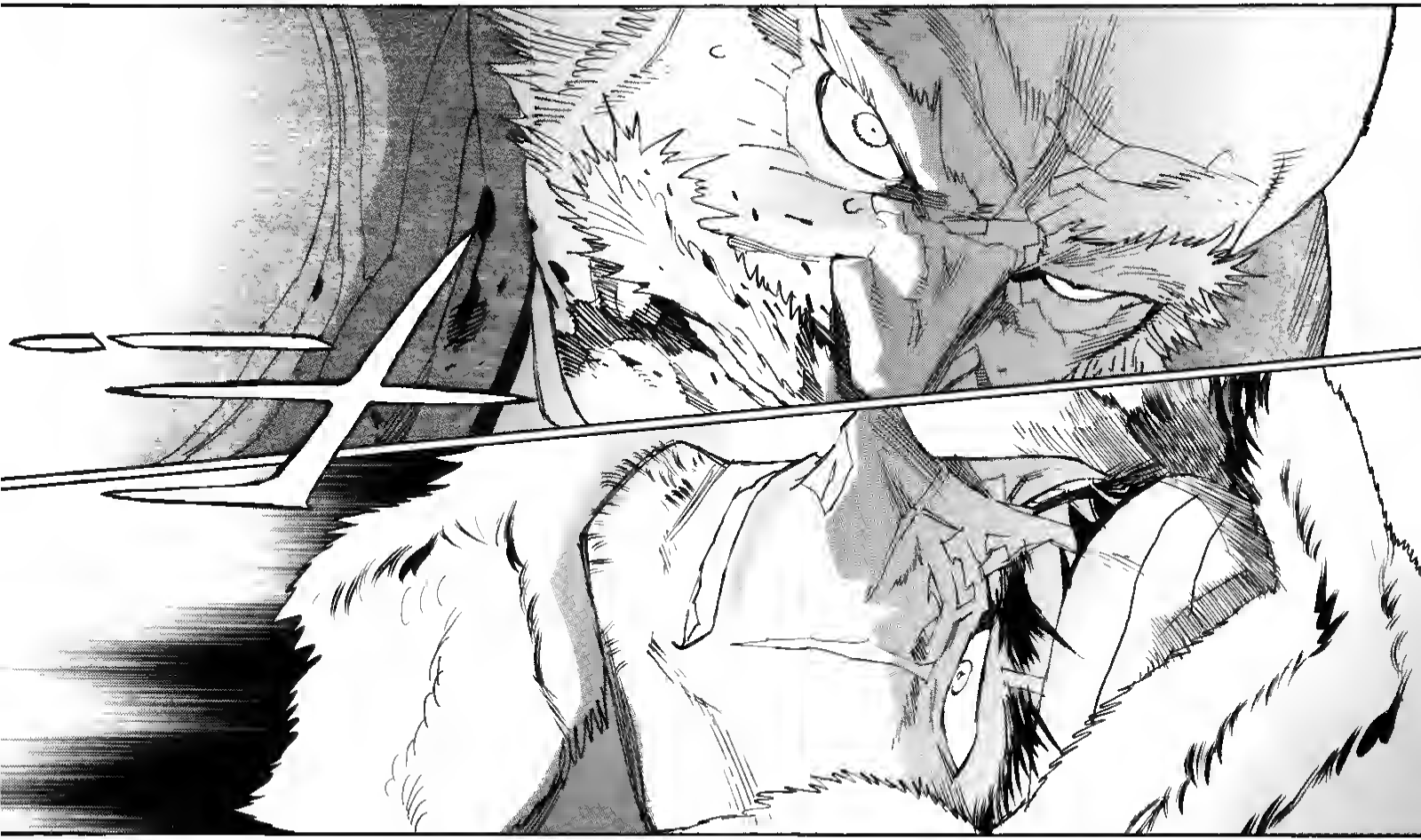
Too bad, old dog.

TRU
THUD
CRACKCRACK
—!

I won't let go.
I never thought I'd be using the same strategy as you.
Ibaha...
Since you've gone to the trouble of striking me a deep blow—
CRACK CRACKCRACK

Come with me, tiger.
—Hara-bal!
Raaah!
SKUMP

To be continued in Shut Hell volume 7...



【手伝ってくれた人々】
井口文枝
大川亜由美
前嶋重機
松山由希
渡邉忠司

【感 謝】
荒川慎太郎（東京外国語大学アジア・アフリカ言語文化研究所准教授）
佐藤貴保（新潟大学研究推進機構超域学術院准教授）
松井 太（弘前大学人文学部教授）

【装 幀】
孝橋淳二

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